GOLDSTEIN: JOE PAPP'S LATINO PROBLEM (P. 35)

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FEIFFER & NIXON: TOGETHER AGAIN (P. 4)

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DONALD WALKER

UAW chief Douglas Fraser: more than a booster shot of liberalism

Rumbles on the Left

UAW's Fraser Builds a Movement

By Peter W. Kaplan

Liberalism made its last run for daylight in Washington last week. Its best and strongest leaders, hanging together in a bumptious coalition called the Progressive Alliance (the word "liberal" is only spoken aloud in the District by bowtied ex-New Dealers), gathered for breakfast at the Capitol Hilton Hotel to plan what may be the last chance to drag the '80s out of the clutches of "The New Realism," "The Era of Limits," the "Carter administration," or whatever you'd like to call the static rightism paralyzing Washington with the efficacy of poison gas.

They were all there, in one of the most impressive flanks of leftist lobbying power the town had collected in some time: high officials from the Machinists' International, the Communications Workers, the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters, the ADA, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform (ACORN), the Urban League, the New Democratic Coalition, the AFL-CIO's industrial-union department—more than 60 organizations in the Democratic coalition McGovern blew apart and Carter avoided reassembling.

There, in the sunny dining room down the street from the White House, was plenty of orange juice and indignation. At the head ta- (Continued on p. 11)

Apocalypse, Nu?

The Late Great Orson Welles

By Mark Jacobson

When the cops broke into David Berkowitz's Yonkers apartment upstairs from Craig who was "Craig" and around the corner from Sam's barking black dog, they found a very small library. Young David, it seems, was a much more avid writer than reader. One of the few volumes in his other-world-charm bachelor pad was a well-thumbed copy of *The Late Great Planet Earth*, a "theoretical" work by one Hal Lindsey that seeks to explain how and why Old Testament apocalyptic prophesy will come true in our lifetime. According to several of Berkowitz's co-letter-throwers at the post office, the .44-caliber killer swore by the book, often remarking, "Everything is in it."

This being the case, you've got to feel sorry for Pacific International Enterprises, the distributors of the current four-

COCKBURN & RIDGEWAY
Fat Is Beautiful: Carter's 'Lean' Budget (P. 16)

CAROL BELLAMY
Hospital Cuts That Don't Bleed

Rumbles on the Left

By Peter W. Kaplan

(Continued from page one)

ble, huddled like Adam-and-Eve-on-a-raft, were Douglas Fraser of the UAW and Ellie Smeal of NOW. At the next table a battered and tired Bella, looking like hell, was regularly consoled for the White House sacking that had confirmed *everything*. Across from Bella the representative from the machinists explained that the union's leader, William Winpisinger, had been landlocked in the Midwest by the blizzard.

Shepherding it all was Fraser, the revered and circumspect UAW chief whose baby this Progressive Alliance was. After quitting the president's Labor-Management Group in disgust last July, Fraser had finally become convinced of the adversary nature of the Carter administration and the rising flood of rational rightism that had made liberalism a passe and dirty political word. He decided to try to change the current. Last October in Detroit he gathered over 100 left-leaning groups (from the Chemical Workers to the National Football League Players Association) to launch a war against "the growing threat of right-wing corporate power in America," and to empower Fraser's UAW to build a Trojan Horse in which they might all ride down Constitution Avenue. The unspoken—and constantly denied—assumption was that if the ride went to Pennsylvania Avenue the driver would be EMK, D.-Mass.

Fraser emphatically denies the presumption. The Progressive Alliance, he says, would be smashed if it was identified as anyone's political vehicle—and he specifies Kennedy as Anyone. Fraser says the alliance has short-term and long-term objectives—and the short-term ones center around the 1980 budget. "They've got $30-$40 billion in cuts there," he said after breakfast in his big Hyatt Regency suite. "If they oppose a 3 per cent increase in the budget, let'em cut the 3 per cent elsewhere besides human services." He poured an 11:15 Budweiser and looked out the window at the Capitol dome. Old friends of Fraser's say that after a lifetime of union work (he started in a Detroit DeSoto plant at 19) with Walter Reuther and then Leonard Woodcock, his attempt to build this alliance represents a last shot to save the liberal ethic in American politics. He's known to be worried about the future leadership of the Auto Workers and is more or less resigned to national conservative trends, grimacing at the mention of Jerry Brown and pragmatic about the Carter administration: "They know they're on the popular side of the issue with the budget. They've convinced people that by reducing services they're going to stop inflation. But the thing that impressed me about that Detroit meeting was that there were 114 national organizations begging to do something about it. It was an incredible goddam turnout."

The alliance will have to work fast. Private UAW estimates project that the member groups will have to contribute around $250,000 for the first year's effort—to hire a staff in Washington, for which Jerry Wurf's American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees will provide an office, and to coordinate organizing groups around the country. Committees of intellectuals and workers will draw up various position papers; more national groups will be solicited; major lobbying efforts will be whipped into action. In March, the alliance will mount its first major effort—either a mass demonstration in Washington with coordinated budget protests around the country, or an assault on the capitol, with hundreds of alliance representatives working the halls of Congress.

As far as presidential politics go, the Dump Carter element is only implicit; in the Age of Limitations, Fraser knows, his. "If Carter is on the right course," he says, "I guess he's got to be saying he can write us off. I think he can get away with it. After all, this country elected Eisenhower twice, and Nixon."

Nevertheless, the *threat* is what he's got, and it's still strong. "A lot of the groups that we have are the ones that won it for him in 1976. Carter won in the Iowa caucus thanks to the people here, and in Florida—well, we put him over." As far as the UAW goes, "we've already had lower-echelon Carter people approach us to ask what they can do for us. We'll be asked to go aboard, but I won't do it."

In the White House they aren't worried. "The UAW and the machinists feel free to criticize the administration, as well they should," says Anne Wexler, a presidential advisor on special interest groups. "But we have a strong working relationship with the UAW. We may disagree on national health insurance, but that doesn't affect our ability to work together on SALT. As far as this administration's ties to progressive groups go, they're the same as they always were," Wexler insisted and reeled off the grocery list: Department of Education issues, the Alaska environmental act, welfare sharing, fiscal assistance, hospital cost containment, election reform, mental-health issues. "We're proud of what we cut," Wexler says. "I never knew how much fat there was in a budget before."

Wexler, unlike many who were involved with women's and liberal issues before joining Carter's bandwagon, isn't having any problems with the political tenor of the administration. She is satisfied with the White House definition of progressive politics and, "despite the Bella thing," on its advances in women's issues. She had just read David Broder's *Washington Post* evaluation of the Powell-Jordan-Rafshoon plot to can Bella (which cast the E.O. Trio salivating like the Beagle Boys at the prospect of humiliating *that loud broad*) and she labeled accusations of White House sexism "outrageous."

No one at the Progressive Alliance breakfast thought that *any* charge against the White House was outrageous and, one after another, they took the floor to pack tougher pistons into the made-in-Detroit statement of principles drawn up by UAW writers and the Institute For Policy Studies' Marc Raskin. The statement called for various liberal "post-New Deal, post-Watergate" programs; for civil liberties; and for a "revitalization" of the political—that is, the Democratic—parties. Fraser masterfully ceded each requested addition; his main task with this alliance will be to hold the factions together and prevent walkouts—union leaders are used to negotiation and compromise, unlike white-collar liberals. He struck the chord they all wanted to hear: "I can't imagine the president would be too comfortable with any of this document. But I don't want to get personal about it."

Bella sat at a nearby table, ignoring the speculation and gossip about her firing. Most of the men expressed indignation and disdain for the clumsiness of the sacking, but they tempered their concern with the inevitable clubby conceit: Well, she is difficult. Bella, who had been emitting an ominous mumble during most of the proceedings, suddenly shot up, waking a napping ADA veteran. "Unless we beef up this document to address women and minorities, we're not going to mobilize!" The well-dressed woman next to her winced as Abzug pierced the air like Ethel Merman: "The weekend events have pointed out the enormous opportunity of this group. We're tired of just being enumerated. This should be BEEFED UP!" Fraser showed the give of a good suspension bridge: "I agree with everything Bella said." "This," she belted out, "is the product of a male-dominated elitist group." She looked very tired. "Carter handled this whole incident very stupidly," Fraser had said at breakfast to Ellie Smeal of NOW; but a great deal about Bella was left unspoken.

The members chosen for the alliance's coordinating committee were a testament to the seriousness with which the enterprise is being taken: machinists' union president William Winpisinger; National Women's Political Caucus's Mildred Jeffrey; president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Bill Lucy; head of ACORN, Wade Rathke; the ADA's Leon Shull. Among them, and with the 60 groups now participating, the alliance won't have any problem organizing large numbers of people or making the big noise it wants to.

Past this year, Fraser Inc. plans to construct a series of tests for President Carter and then use his predictably hard-line responses to fuel its new liberalism. Leaders of the coalition have been patiently sending away the press with reasoned dismissals of the organization-as-Kennedy-vehicle theory, insisting that their purpose is to haul policy leftward. "Walter Reuther used to say," grins Fraser, "that the only way to make a politician stand up is to have equal pressures from both sides." He is sincere and intent about it and, despite the non-participation of Meany—whom the UAW people view as 19th-century material—his resources are ample to do serious battle with the administration. Their first target is the 1980 budget.

The Alliance is the first significant liberal challenge to a president from within his party since Vietnam and Johnson. "We will draw strength from each other," Fraser says, and then with a swell pinpoints his mark: "It's a counterattack. We're going to advance the ideas of civilization and make another step forward in the Democratic Party." The sort of advance he favors isn't difficult to interpret; it goes beyond next year's budget or Social Security. More than a booster shot of liberalism, the project, if it works, will restructure sensibilities so that social and economic experimentation return to the stage after a 10-year absence. Yet if the structure works—the first test will be in March—it will inevitably be a ready-made machine for a like-minded leader.

And there's no question which leader that means. Two days after the alliance breakfast, Fraser introduced a 10 a.m. speaker to the 2500 UAW members who packed the Hyatt Regency auditorium for their legislative conference: "If you hear a voice speaking up for the principle of equality, it's this man's," he said, hooking his three-piece suit. "I'd like to present to you the senior senator from Massachusetts and the next—the next . . . chairman of the Judiciary Committee!" Teddy rose up to a roar. ■

DOUGLAS R. WALKER

BETTYE LANE

Marc Raskin of the Institute for Policy Studies drafted the alliance's original statement of principles. NOW's Ellie Smeal was a key participant in the October launching in Detroit.

Manhattan Rumbles

Douglas Fraser's alliance may be the largest group actively challenging administration policy, but it's not the most direct, or necessarily the most audacious. Since Christmas, a small group of Democratic Party elite—all of whom had been involved in national political conventions in past years—have been meeting regularly in a Madison Avenue law office to organize an active pocket of opposition. Only two participants in the sessions - Paul O'Dwyer and labor lawyer I. Philip Sipser - have gone public, but members include party officials, trade-union leaders, McCarthy and McGovern veterans, feminists. "Unless there is a more adequate candidate," Sipser says, "a Republican will win."

The group won't stay anonymous for long: Sometime in the next few weeks they will buy a full-page ad in the *Times* to determine whether a poised constituency is waiting for the right horse. "We're very loose, very small, and we're not inferring that we're going to overthrow the government," says Sipser. "But my own belief is that Carter has decided he's going to play ball with big business in this country. He doesn't give a shoot about labor."

The group has some money, and its members—all of whom have campaign, union, or lobbyist contacts—have been assigned to feel things out in 20 of the United States. If the *Times* ad draws checks, then the committee will buy space in other papers around the country. Sipser says the group has spoken to Senator Kennedy's office and has gotten exactly the response they expected: "that the senator is supporting Carter." These veterans of the McCarthy campaign are thinking about New Hampshire 12 years after. —P.K.

RUNNIN' SCARED: WESTWAY IS DYING (P. 3)

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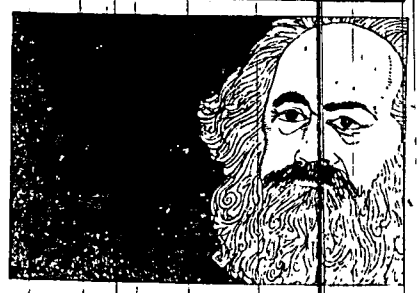

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Is There Hope for the '80s?

The Race To Beat the Right

MAPS, MICROTEXTS & Serials
MAR 26 1979
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

By Alexander Cockburn & James Ridgeway

Is there any way the President can redeem himself in your eyes?"

"Yes, there's one way he can do it."

"What's that?"

"Die."

William Winpisinger, head of the million-strong Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, paused.

"I don't wish that on him, but that's the only goddamn way I know that he can."

"So he's totally unacceptable as President?"

"I have said so countless times. I don't intend to relent. He's unfit to run this goddamn country. He was elected on the crest of the wave of truth-sayers, and that son of a bitch has lied through his fucking teeth every day he's been there. . . . It's quite clear that he marches to the drumbeat of the corporate state."

Winpisinger, a large, chunky, and angry man, would not ordinarily be regarded as a spokesman for American labor. He's well-known as a maverick on the left end of the trade union spectrum. But his harsh, merciless assessment of the man his union helped elect in 1976 does represent something more than an idiosyncratic point of view.

Out of frustrations and defeats of American labor over the last decade has finally been born the sense that time is running out; that if labor is to go on the offensive, it must do so now.

Labor leaders suffer the sight of a Democratic President and a Democratic Congress, which has dealt them one savage defeat after another. The disaster culminated last year in the rout of labor law reform and continues now with the budget cuts, Carter's vehement refusal to endorse national health insurance programs, and his tolerance for escalating prices of basic necessities: most of all, oil and natural gas.

Ten years ago, labor's politics was symbolized by the sight of hard-hat construction workers beating up anti-war demonstrators *(Continued on page 11)*

Machinist Union's William Winpisinger

Radio Radio

A Fan Talks Back

BY GEORGIA CHRISTGAU (P. 43)

Shake-up at WNEW-FM

BY JAN HOFFMAN (P. 46)

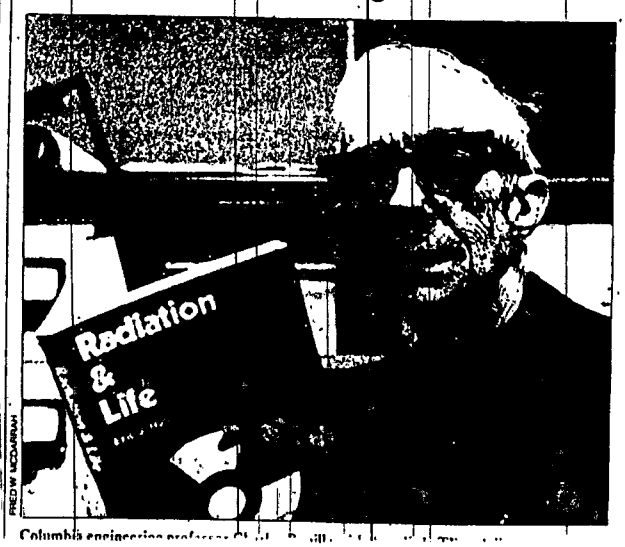
VOICE **ARTS**

The Family of Friends
Stone on Ann Beattie (P. 86)

Racializing Shakespeare
Blumenthal on 'Coriolanus' (P. 89)

Fastest Fad in the West
Allen on 'Boulevard Nights' (P. 50)

'A Harmless Little Reactor That Can't Possibly Have an Accident'



FRED W. MCDARRAH

Columbia engineering professor

By Anna Mayo

Backed by powerful pro-nuclear forces, Columbia University is battling for permission to start up its notorious nuclear reactor, TRIGA Mark II. The last remaining barrier to TRIGA operation is New York City's refusal to issue the university a health and safety permit.

Drafted by Dr. Leonard Solon, director of the New York City Health Department's Bureau for Radiation Control, the permit denial makes alarming reading. Solon points out that there is some chance that radioactive TRIGA effluents could contaminate the ancient unpredictable Croton Aqueduct system that runs beneath Amsterdam Avenue, providing a substantial part of the Manhattan water supply. Further, Solon warns that the Morningside Heights/Harlem area is so densely populated that in the event of an accident, timely evacuation would be impossible. He says that "Accident, criminal, or terrorist scenarios which resulted in even one per

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THE MOVING TARGET

By Alexander Cockburn & James Ridgeway

Is There Any Hope for the '80s?

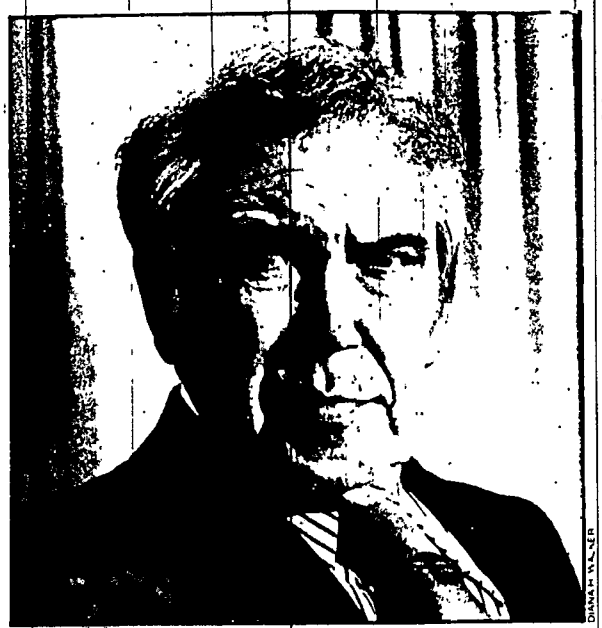
(Continued from page one) demonstrators on the steps of the New York Stock Exchange. Today all that has changed. Civil rights veterans and New Left organizers have spent the intervening years building grassroots organizations across the country. It is to these organizations that some of the most powerful labor leaders have turned. Together, they have begun the attempt to forge a new political program for the 1980s.

That process, uncertain and strewn with difficulty, accelerated last week. In Washington, a dozen labor leaders met privately for dinner. They had been called together by Douglas Fraser, head of the United Auto Workers Union. For months, Fraser had struggled to weld together unions, community groups, feminists, blacks, and Hispanics into an overt organization to be called the Progressive Alliance. Until early this month, his efforts had been frustrated. His lieutenants began to feel that Fraser—under some fire from within his own union—would be forced to abandon his own initiative for lack of substantial support.

Fraser knew that assembling the alliance would be a delicate process. It would be wrong for labor to stitch together what amounted to a political organization with too heavy a hand; but at the same time, if it were to work at all, labor had to take the lead—especially in the initial financing. So, at the dinner last week, Fraser said, in effect, Put up or shut up. The UAW was prepared to make a significant contribution—reportedly $50,000. Fraser suggested that the other labor leaders present do likewise. By the end of the meeting, Fraser had raised a quarter of a million dollars and the Progressive Alliance took on tangible reality. With this money in hand, the Allinace can now begin seriously to seek a staff director. At the top of the list is Richard Warden, assistant secretary at HEW for legislation, and Secretary Joseph Califano's major political operator. He was formerly the UAW's legal director in Washington.

The Alliance has so far been billed—in this paper as well as elsewhere—as everything from a short-term organization to draft Teddy Kennedy in 1980 to a think-tank to combat the torrent of right-wing propaganda from the American Enterprise Institute to the embryo of a third party.

On one simple level, it does in fact reassemble the coalition which worked so effectively for Carter in 1976. To get some notion of how the Alliance is now perceived by some of the major labor leaders involved, we talked over the last month to Winpsinger of the Machinists, Fraser of the UAW, and Jerry Wurf of the American Federation of State and County Municipal Employees. From their views, short- and long-term—tumultuous in the case of Winpisinger, prudent in the case of Wurf—one can get a glimpse of what the Alliance may be about.



UAW's Douglas Fraser assembled the Progressive Alliance.

DIANA H. WALKER

Jerry Wurf of the State and County Municipal Employees

DIANA H. WALKER

Voices of Labor

First Bill Winpisinger,

You had hopes for Carter when he ran?

If you listened to his campaign promises and took a look at the Democratic Party platform, there was no reason not to be for him. This union did a yeoman job on the party platform. We got some stuff in there by the sheer dint of the work this union did, stuff that he completely ignored, that he subverted. One of the party planks was to continue the regulation of natural gas. You saw what he did with that one. I blame the whole Congress, and that's why every son of a bitch who voted for [illegible] today, and the other guy's side the next day and you never know which side he's going to come down on when he gets up in the morning.

What happened the last time you saw Carter?

I went away terribly disappointed. But not because of anything the President did. . . . I was with a group of federation [AFL-CIO] officers, including Meany. Me and one other guy were the only ones who kept our mouths shut throughout the entire goddamn meeting. Those in the group badly embarrassed the old man, which I will not do whatever my differences with him might be. He's the president of the federation. He is not my personal enemy in that sense. I've had professional disagreements with him, even philosophical disagreements. But I've got an enormous respect for him too, because he did not get where he is or stay where he is without having plenty on the ball, and the fact that he's over the hill is a matter of opinion still. And I watched him embarrassed by his own colleagues who were supposed to be his friends.

How?

Because every time he tried to zero in on the President of the United States to get to the meat of the cocottut and give the little bastard a sho, he'd be interrupted by one of his colleagues, saying Mr. President, he doesn't mean that. They just put words in his mouth, apologizing for Meany's aggressiveness. If you're the top banana, you're the top banana. You don't want a bunch of sycophants running around putting words in your mouth.

Given the fact that you say that the two parties are the same, why not start out and build another party that represents the kind of positions you're talking about?

The Alliance may well come to that. Right now, my opinion is the only one I know of in the labor movement. I can't find any of my colleagues to whom I've talked who agrees with me that what we've got is a one-party system. They say, what the hell, the Democrats are still better than the Republicans. Tell me where? We don't have a Democratic party any more We've got a one-party system. . . . From time to time there have been attempts, roundly booed, for third-party adventures like George Wallace's and they're always castigated as the villains who attempt to upset the inherently perfect history of America. We stand in more goddamn danger right this minute than we ever have from those aberrations.

How do you see the relationship between the unions and the other groups—Mass Fair Share, ACORN and so on—in the Progressive Alliance and your Consumer/Energy Labor Coalition?

I see us all bound together by one or more issues, which results in us all being pointed in the same direction politically. As a matter of fact, those organizations in concert could be the wellspring of a third-party movement. We happen to agree with them on most of the issues. It's quite clear that most of my colleagues in labor don't. . . . The Alliance takes bold steps to start, but if you take the UAW, state and county [AFSCME], us, and the Operating Engineers, you've already got a significant number of people involved. Frankly, the more aggressive Doug [Fraser] becomes, the more I would think that we will enjoy success. That was one of the reasons for the early growing pains. Doug wasn't, and I don't mean this critically either, the forceful kind of guy when it comes to something like this. I think he was getting some bad advice from some of his operatives. You can't milquetoast the situation with the President and expect to attract guys like me, for example.

When Fraser said that one of the hopes might be to set up a radical equivalent of the American Enterprise Institute, he was talking about a generation's work. Do you think that's realistic?

Sure. We need a counter-balance to the AEI. Labor has never developed a professional think-tank of its own that has any credibility on the street. People used to point to Brookings and say that was a left-wing think tank. I was over there the other day and I call it a corporate think-tank. When I see some of the asinine bullshit they grind out of there, it's the antithesis of the workers' interests.

Are you a socialist?

That's the column in which I'm most often put, and I don't object when I am. I don't know what better description there would be. I'm not a textbook socialist. I don't truly believe some of the tenets of Marx or any of that shit. I have never been afraid of, nor am I now afraid of, public ownership of the essential means of production, or the kind of socialism it takes to make capitalism work. I'm not the kind of socialist who would say that we ought to own everything. I don't think that's too successful because the record's replete with too many failures. I've sometimes said you've got to fine tune capitalism with a dose of socialism. You have to

have public ownership for the things that are fucking up the system.

At the last Progressive Alliance meeting someone spoke up for a 40 per cent cut in the defense budget and Fraser was more for 5 per cent . . .

I can't account for Doug's conservatism on that one. The figure I most often use is $30 billion as a floor.

How will you end up persuading Kennedy to run?

I don't know. I don't know if we can. But we're going to set the stage so that it will minimize absolutely the reasons for him to say no. I can understand the reluctance of a Democrat to take on a sitting Democrat and we have to establish a scene in which we have proven that Carter can't win."

UAW president Fraser:

Do you think Carter can recover himself in the eyes of these people here [at a Progressive Alliance meeting]?

With these people? Very difficult. I think he's in difficulties generally.

In terms of yourself?

It depends on the alternatives. If Reagan or Crane or that ton of a bitch Connally [were running], I wouldn't have any problem. I'd vote for Jimmy Carter tomorrow because basically I think he's an honest and intelligent man. I disagree with him more and more all the time. But given the choice I wouldn't have any difficulty. I'm not for sitting it out. I just can't.

But it would be hard to conceive of these people supporting Jerry Brown?

I think that's an accurate assessment. . . . I don't view the Progressive Alliance as being the instrument for any candidate. . . . A couple of people got up here and said, Let's go march against Carter. It's not so much that this is troublesome to me, but if you look at the Alliance as we view it, we hope it's going to be in existence long after I've left the UAW. We need an organization of the future that will advance progressive ideas, think through new ideas, new approaches, new concepts. So if that's your concept of the organization, you'll destroy it if you get involved in politics of the personality. That's the problem.

But if Kennedy were suddenly to say he was running?

We still wouldn't do it. I suppose what would happen—we're talking in practical political terms—is that most of the groups here who do endorse candidates would go to him. There's no question of that.

But you see the Alliance working inside the Democratic Party and that third-party coalitions are far away?

They're far away in this country. Something dramatic has to happen in this country, a depression, something like that, to make a third party viable. I'm not against a third-party philosophically. It's just not feasible practical politics in 1979.

But does it go beyond being the best current exposition of the New Deal?

I think so. First of all, in fairness to the New Deal, there are a lot of programs that were part of it that have not yet been enacted. National Health Insurance, for one. . . . On the other hand, the old New Deal isn't good enough for the 1980s and the 1990s and what we have to do is to advance new ideas.

In terms of the energy business, for example. Would you think that some form of nationalization would be in order?

I would personally, yes.

Would the Alliance?

I think on that one, yes. . . . There's a receptiveness out there. Why? Because our people—and they're not much different from anybody else—know that they're getting screwed. And so when you speak out and say about us having a pluralistic system, where we have some government and some private enterprise, they eat it up.

Would you be comfortable with socialism in the United States?

Well, it depends in what form. You see, all my socialist friends in the United States and Europe. . . . When I see them run their governments, sometimes they don't do so goddamn well. It worries me. I guess what I'm for, and I say this to Mike Harrington or any of my friends, is that the best answer is a pluralistic society. . . . You have competing forces. The government can discipline private industry and private industry can discipline government. Oil is a case in point.

You've got some strong unions involved in the Alliance, but what plans have you got for reaching out to the union membership?

There are two ways. Each group will have to go back to their constituents. We're running articles in our paper. We're having meetings with our leadership. We've got our whole political staff in here today and we're going to fan out that way. The other way of doing it is to build under this structure a state structure. It's difficult to get a mass movement, a membership movement going, but we're going to try.

Jerry Wurf (AFSCME):

How do you see the Alliance?

In essence, what we've really got is a coalition of men and women of good will who are trying to get reasonable response from the Administration, and from Congress. I don't think we're dealing with the philosophical differences that exist so much as with developing pragmatic consensus politics.

What are your political plans for 1980?

We have not made the decision to be hostile to the President personally, or hostile to his reelection or for his reelection. As the issues develop from this point, we're going to call them as we see them. . . . What are our options? I happen to think that if I had a choice between Carter and Brown and that was my only choice, my choice would be Carter. Brown is somebody who can be a liberal on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and a conservative on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. He was saying things at the governors' conference in Washington that even Barry Goldwater would be embarrassed by. Will Teddy Kennedy come forward as a real candidate? I don't know. Thus far he has said he'll support Carter for reelection. Till that situation develops into something we can respond to realistically, I've got to take him at his word.

What's your view of third-party talk?

I'd have said to you six months ago that our membership, our constituency, simply is not interested in a third party, that talk of a third party is utopian. But with the kind of crises that are happening, let me say that I see the tip of an iceberg. I don't want to create the illusion that it's a realistic alternative at this moment.

Such are some of the voices of labor; to turn now to some other components of the new alliance:

What Happened After the '60s?

A look at the map of progressive politics in the U.S. today makes it apparent that many of the old dividing lines are being erased and strands of activity and analysis that have been quite separate over the past 10 years are becoming intertwined.

Conspicuous as ever in any genealogical tree is the formative political experience of much of the generation now in its thirties and forties, such as civil rights organizing in the South in the early '60s and the community organizing fostered by the late Saul Alinsky in Chicago, which even permeated some aspects of the federal poverty program and has burgeoned into the innumerable neighborhood organizing drives of the present time.

The drive for welfare rights is another strand, and of course the movements against the war. Many of the people now active in the grass-roots organizations have long histories of political activity in more turbulent times.

Michael Ansara, staff director of Mass Fair Share, comes out of SDS and the student antiwar movement at Harvard. Lee Webb, who now runs the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policy, did pioneering work for *Ramparts* magazine exposing the CIA's penetration of universities. He was in SDS and later worked in Vermont, helping

"The old New Deal isn't good enough for the 1980s and 1990s. What we have to do is to advance new ideas."
—Douglas Fraser

to devise the Lifeline concept of providing essential electricity for poor people. Wade Rathke, the major organizer for ACORN, worked in the movement for welfare rights led by George Wiley. Heather Booth, who now leads one of the most significant coalitions between progressive labor and citizens' organizations, was active in the antiwar movement. Ira Arlook, executive director of the Ohio Public Interest Campaign, comes from a background of civil rights and community organizing in Massachusetts and California. Tom Hayden, chairman of the Campaign for Economic Democracy and a major political figure in California, was one of the best-known of the antiwar leaders. Marcus Raskin, of the Institute for Policy Studies, is credited with being one of the early and most effective proponents of the idea of the Progressive Alliance. Much of the analysis of inflation now used by the labor movement comes from Gar Alperovitz and his Project for Economic Alternatives.

There are other strains. Don Stillman, now the editor of the UAW newspaper and a public spokesman for Fraser, was one of a handful of activists who first took on the United Mine Workers under Tony Boyle, and then, in the heyday of that union's reform, went on to run its newspaper in Washington.

Central to the ideology of all the organizations as they have now evolved is a combative stance toward corporations. The one person who has provided the analysis and behind it an education over 15 years of the nature of corporate structure and misfeasance is Ralph Nader. It was Nader who, at the practical level, opened up and progressively widened the area for understanding and fighting big business.

Another figure of equivalent seminal influence is Michael Harrington, author of *The Other America*, perhaps the best-known postwar book on poverty in the U.S. Today, Harrington is the leader of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, itself a precursor of many of the coalitions now forming. He has argued for political activism—backed by open espousal of socialism—within the Democratic Party. He has not ignored the reality and potential of the labor movement.

Recognition of this reality now distinguishes many of the activists mentioned above. The unions, it should never be forgotten, form the base for progressive mass political activity in this country. Unions have provided much of the money, goodwill, and the energy for what little progressive change there has been. It is too often forgotten in the uproar of public and environmental organizations competing for approval and public attention that the unions have been the bastion for progressive politics. Anyone doubting this need only glance at the causes which unions such as the UAW, the Machinists, the Steelworkers, the OCAW, AFSCME, and many others have encouraged over the years.

This is only part of the picture of the makeup of a new progressive alliance. Amid lamentation over the "me decade" and the political vacuum of the '70s, it is possible to take some comfort in the variety and richness of popular engagement: the roles of some churches, the continuing and persistent campaigns for the rights of small farmers, the coalitions of environmentalists and ranchers who have battled for strip-mine regulation, the emerging power of the senior citizen groups, which in the 1980s will command immense political power.

Such evocation could become not only sentimental but encyclopedic. Practical political analysis requires description of the major citizens' organizations which have managed to establish themselves over the past few years and which form part of the tentative new alliance with labor.

The New Activists

The new citizens' organizations vary, both in structure and achievement. One of the best-known is Massachusetts Fair Share, started in 1972 in Chelsea, northeast of Boston. Today it is a statewide organization with more than 100 permanent staff; 20,000 members (of whom perhaps 4000 are actively involved in a given year); chapters in 34 communities; and a budget of more than $1 million a year. It is financed by door-to-door canvassing, and institutional support from foundations; churches, and the VISTA program.

Perhaps the first thing to be noted about Mass Fair Share is that it has managed to become a permanent fixture in the Massachusetts political landscape. This stability has been achieved by a mixture of local and statewide activity. A typical local chapter of the organization might get going by recruiting a neighborhood around something as picayune as a dangerous abandoned building, a needed stop sign, or a vandalized playground. Mass Fair Share organizers treat as a priority the building of local ties—with parish priests in Fall River, for example, or with veterans' organizations, or senior citizens groups.

At the same time, Mass Fair Share has launched a member of statewide campaigns. It won reforms on auto insurance rates. It successfully established its legal right to publish the names of tax delinquents—often corporations. In 1978 its "circuit-breaker" tax bill, which provides direct relief to working people whose taxes take more than a certain percentage of their income, passed successfully through the state legislature before going down before a pocket veto by the former governor, Michael Dukakis.

The organization suffered a major defeat in 1976 when its campaign for "flat rates" in utility charges (eliminating the bias against small users) was defeated in a statewide referendum. The reason was simple enough. Mass Fair Share was out-organized by the corporations, who put together a powerful alliance of banks, unions, universities, hospitals—all claiming that the proposed reform would scare business out of the state.

Two years later, Mass Fair Share showed that it had learned the lessons of that defeat. In November, 1978 when an amendment to the state constitution proposing that residential properties be taxed at a lower rate than business properties the ballot, a coalition including unions, churches, savings and loan banks, veterans, and other groups—and including the mayor of Boston—produced victory.

Michael Ansara, now 30 and formerly an SDS antiwar activist, has been staff director of Mass Fair Share for the last two years. In the headquarters overlooking Boylston Street he and Mass Fair Share president Mrs. Terry Foley expounded recently on the nature and aims of Fair Share.

Income of Mass Fair Share members averages between $8000 and $15,000, with a smattering of the very poor. Members are mostly white. Ansara says that with the decline of blue-collar neighborhoods in the Midwest and Northeast, a crisis developed, creating conditions in which people who had been normally passive politically found they had needs no one could answer: "The organization reaches people who are conservative. It provides them with the experience that ordinary people can shape their lives. It's not an ideological, not a socialist organization. It brings in people on the basis of self-interest. It seeks to develop an anti-corporate populist vision out of the experience of the members."

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BARBARA ALPER

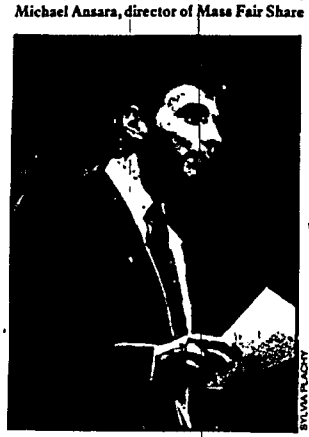
Michael Ansara, director of Mass Fair Share

MATT BULKOWY

Ira Arlook, director of Ohio Public Interest Campaign

MATT BULKOWY

Dennis Kucinich, mayor of Cleveland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Ralph Nader

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Heather Booth, director of the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition

MICHAEL SMITH

Wade Rathke, ACORN's chief organizer

ward boss. We can move in, and we won abatements of $100,000."

The American left, says Ansara, swings between "voluntarism" in times of turbulence, and "determinism" in more conservative phases. "It never accepts limits. But you must recognize constituencies. You cannot will mass organizations into existence . . . We never preach. We've been building an integrated organization, but we never say join for integration." "We are a watchdog consumer activist group," says Mrs. Foley, a mother of six from Somerville. "If Fair Share gets involved in race it's going to lose a lot of support. It's not a consumer problem, it's a social problem."

Pursuing the same thought, Ansara says Mass Fair Share keeps clear of "social issues," such as abortion, affirmative-action, homosexual rights. "These issues are not going to reach the working class. The primary characteristic of the last few years has been the corporate mobilization and the shift to the right. Now we see the development of a reaction. It's an important opening for the development of working class mobilization around economic issues. We could get outorganized by the populist right. Right now we see right populism just echoing the ideological message of the corporations. But if they get smart enough, the people we organize could be organized by someone else. It's a race."

Unlike many similar citizens' organizations across the country, Mass Fair Share is not a coalition of small groups; it has a single unitary structure—with decisions ultimately approved by delegate assembly. Mass Fair Share is attempting at present to see it can reproduce itself in other states—most imminently, in New Hampshire.

Mass Fair Share has clout, and politicians are sometimes glad to ally themselves with it. "But," says Ansara, "we don't run or support people for elections. We are reviewing this approach, but I doubt we are ready to run candidates. Election activity produces followers and volunteers rather than leaders. It divides the top leaders from the base. It requires centralized decision-making and does not produce conflict. Elections are not where you build power. They're where you express it."

At present, Mass Fair Share is cementing alliances, hunkering down for a series of fights against Governor Ed King, and attempting to widen its range of issues, in areas such as job loss and runaway corporations. "Fair Share was built laboriously. We're fighting for every person. We're trying to give birth to a movement," Ansara said. He added, somewhat gloomily, "My fear is it will all go into a Teddy Kennedy campaign" (in which the populist, anti-corporate impetus would ultimately be lost). The question for the next five years is: Can you build a locally-rooted, anti-corporate coalition across the country? Statewide, regional, national. You can never build economic democracy in just one state."

Example in Ohio

One organization that already works closely with labor is the Ohio Public Interest Campaign of which Ira Arlook is executive Director. Founded in 1976, OPIC is a federation of previously existing organizations, including unions, senior-citizen groups, neighborhood organizations, and minority groups. Like Mass Fair Share, OPIC hopes to build a coalition of low-and moderate-income people. Unlike Mass Share, its staff is relatively small—20 people. Its annual budget is $350,000, and it has offices in all the major Ohio cities, functioning through steering committees of member groups in each city. In addition to the affiliated group, citizens can join the organization by forming at-large chapters. OPIC receive contributions from 125,000 families, which give some idea of its range.

OPIC has had some impressive successes. Two years ago, before Dennis Kucinich made his run for the mayoralty of Cleveland, OPIC raised the issue of tax abatements for corporations and started a campaign to stop the pillaging of the public purse so notably symbolized by the deal which would have relieved National City Bank of its property taxes in downtown Cleveland. The Cleveland City Council in the days of the illustrious Ralph Perkis' mayoralty, went right ahead and endorsed tax abatements. Kucinich opposed the tax breaks and made them a major issue in his campaign. OPIC, which had done the original research and lobbying, was thus in part responsible for his victory.

In the recent fight to save the public power system from takeover by a private utility, Muny Light, OPIC worked closely with the UAW in running the campaign. Leaflets, speakers, day-to-day contact with the community organizations, special campaigns in specific wards were among the ways in which OPIC fought to maintain Muny and, consequently, Kucinich.

But OPIC is perhaps better-known elsewhere in Ohio for its vigorous lobbying on behalf of the Community Readjustment Act, a measure that attempts to stem corporate flight, the bane of the Northern Rim.

The bill, which was first introduced late last year in the Ohio legislature, would require companies that plan to leave to provide advance notice of intended departure, severance payments and, among other requirements, payments into a community-assistance fund. Similar legislation is being introduced in Massachusetts and Illinois, and a related push is to be mounted on the federal level in Washington.

If the Community Readjustment Act seems to be a good instance of citizens groups and unions working closely together, the Ohio Fair Tax Initiative is another—and one which impressively shows what this kind of coalition can do. The initiative seeks to balance the tax load by removing loopholes used by corporations, thus increasing state revenues. It would also institute a property-tax circuit-breaker for poor and moderate-income people. Under this scheme, if a family pays more than a certain percentage of its income in property taxes, it gets money back on its income tax. The initiative procedure in Ohio is arduous. But within five weeks, OPIC got 93,0000 signatures for the initiative. The legislature may now approve it, in which case it becomes law. If not, further signatures will be required for a ballot vote next year.

Illinois Bedrock

Yet another successful mass-based citizen group is the Illinois Public Action Council. IPAC's executive director is 32-year old Robert Creamer. His background is an interesting example of the lineage of citizens' groups. Creamer grew up in Louisiana and went to Duke University, where he was active in the antiwar movement. At graduate school in Chicago he met Paul and Heather Booth. He worked with Paul Booth in the late 1960s and early 1970s fighting the pollution caused by Commonwealth Edison, and became a member of Citizens Action Program—an Alinsky-sponsored organization. CAP moved from pollution to taxes and started campaigning against under-assessments of industrial and commercial property. Next, it attacked redlining. In 1974, Creamer started setting up the Illinois Public Action Committee and—after Dave Zwick, who worked for Nader, had traveled the state finding potential member groups for the overall federation—it was created in 1976. It aims at a constituency of moderate- to low-income people.

Increasingly, it becomes apparent, in scrutiny of these large citizen organizations, that they are taking on the trappings of city or county government, even evoking—with-

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out the pejorative connotation—the political apparatus of a Tammany Hall as a broker with political clout between local and state governments and the people. The diligence with which bodies such as Mass Fair Share or the Illinois Public Action Council foster ties with labor, churches, etc., underlines this role.

The main area of IPAC's concerns is predictable: it seeks utility-rate reform through Lifeline; a ban on disconnection of power to your consumers during winter months; and is mounting a campaign to elect members to the State Commerce Commission, which oversees utility regulation.

IPAC is drafting major property-tax reform, including a circuit-breaker proposal. Overall, it is pushing for higher rates for industry and lower ones for residential homeowners. And IPAC has fought successfully to regulate mortage-banking operations which have resulted in red-lining and foreclosure in the neighborhoods.

The Council wants to ensure that the insurance industry in Illinois is brought under regulation, with a view to controlling rates. It is active in health-care, especially in arranging for services and it is pushing to wrest from Blue Cross the exclusive control of the local doctors and hospital administrators who sit on the medical plan's local boards. Along with OPIC, IPAC has joined with unions in fighting the runaway shop.

But what makes IPAC particularly significant is its technique for financing not only its own operation, but for reaching out with a package of crucial services to a mass audience. IPAC is now offering, through radio and soon on television, prepaid legal, and tax services, together with the recourse by counseling over consumer hot-lines. Some 1100 families are already paying $175 each a year for service under this novel scheme, begun last October. For this, they automatically get a range of professional services: preparation of wills, advice on credit problems, simple divorce, house-closing, or bankruptcy. If a family has landlord problems, it can call a "consumer hotline." Simple tax work is also included in the packet: for more complex counseling, the subscriber pays $25 an hour.

There are a number of further elaborations of the basic plan: small businesses, for example, can pay an initial $75 fee for which they receive help, on things like incorporation, filing for patents, and dealing with mergers or tax authorities. Creamer points out that IPAC's is the first prepaid legal plan open to the public in the country. It came about as a result of the Supreme Court's decision to allow advertising for legal services.

Judging public involvement in organizations like IPAC is not easy matter. Creamer estimates that about 4000 people actually participate in his organization in any one year. But in terms of people reached, the numbers are much higher. IPAC works with the Machinists, who have 90,000 members in Illinois, and the Steelworkers, with 70,000. Last year, IPAC received 80,000 contributions in amounts of $3 to $5 and it collected 250,000 signatures in support of its goals and operations during canvassing. Its budget is about $500,000 a year; it has offices in Chicago, Champlain, and Springfield; and a staff of 65. Overall, the idea of IPAC is to develop a progressive force in Illinois politics at the issue level. "Labor has to be the rock bed," Creamer says. "It's the largest organization of working people." And he stresses the advantage for labor in participating in the coalition. It helps prevent political isolation, and forges a common purpose with other sectors of the populace.

Outward From Arkansas

Spread in varying depths across 16 states from Louisiana to South Dakota and from Pennsylvania to Nevada is the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), and in many respects, it seems to be quite different from many of the bodies described above. It proposes itself as a national group, whose 22,000 members pay dues, just as they would in a union. In the eight years since its inception, ACORN has become best-known for its vigorous and successful local battles, which have embraced direct action as well as electoral successes. ACORN's main strength is in Arkansas and Missouri, but it has a fair number of chapters in Texas and its headquarters is in New Orleans.

Because of its experience and success in electoral politics, ACORN is now bringing its membership together to develop a range of issues to be assembled under the title, "A People's Platform." The platform includes a call for national health insurance, the rights of people to decent housing and a job, tax reform, anti-redlining, and the national electricity Lifeline. In general, the tone of ACORN's platform is anti-corporate. Because it operates in states where delgates to the national Democratic convention are chosen through caucuses, ACORN in all probability will run its candidates in those caucuses.

A review of ACORN's activities gives a speedy notion of its scope: opposing the Wilbur Mills Exway through Little Rock; establishment of a food buyers coop there; a campaign against tax assessments; free bus service for school children; attacks on power-plant sites; scuttling of a proposed convention in Pine Bluff, Arkansas; winning half the seats in the Pulaski County legislature won in 1974; approval of generic drug-pricing by the Arkansas state legislature; fights for lifeline electric rates; equalization of property taxes; a campaign to overturn the ban on eyeglass advertising; another to abolish the sales tax on food and medicine in Missouri; the winning of a reduction on telephone-service charges in Texas. ACORN's bill to curb redlining was signed into law in Missouri in 1977. In 1978 tenants organized by ACORN in Reno, Nevada, won a six-month rent freeze and revised leases.

The politics of ACORN are certainly not particularly left-wing. Steve McDonald, the board president in Little Rock, made clear the ACORN was composed of "a group of people who have been left out" and who "want to be part of the mainstream." McDonald, an IBM employee, hastily adds, "We're not trying to take over. The establishment has a right, too. But we want to have our fair share." Regarding monopoly practices, McDonald says, "We need competition."

Wade Rathke is ACORN's chief organizer. He originally came to Arkansas at the start of the 1970s, after working in the Welfare Rights Organization in Massachusetts. The sedateness of political purpose suggested by McDonald's remarks is not entirely dispelled by an interview with Rathke. While insisting that the overall idea involved in ACORN is the redistribution of power (i.e., wealth) in the country, and while this aim continues to flesh out the platform, an aroma of parochialism, even conservatism, can be detected in Rathke's analysis.

To an outsider, ACORN's politics seem relatively limited. Rathke himself has the organizational reputation of being a kind of loner, playing the world of citizen politics rather in the manner of a general in a Pentagon war room.

A year ago this month, Fair Share, OPIC, and IPAC joined with a range of other citizen's organization, public interest groups, and unions to create the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, under the leadership of Bill Winpisinger's Machinists. This was the first time that unions and citizens' groups had joined in a functioning coalition on a wide scale. The Coalition now operates in 27 states and has six regional offices.

Its executive director is Heather Booth of Chicago. Behind Booth lie years of political activity: SNCC in the '60s in the south, and then SDS. She was an early activist in the women's movement. She and her husband, Paul, who now works for AFSCME, were two of the most important members of the student left.

Since the early 1970s, Heather Booth has sought ways to bring together community and labor groups within a political coalition, and to that end, in 1973 she founded the Midwest Academy in Chicago. The Academy

FREDW McDARRAH

Michael Harrington, leader of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee

has been a training school for community activists, a crossroads where the growing network of organizers across the country meet, a forum for analysis. While there is no formal connection between the Academy and the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, Heather Booth works part-time on both.

The Coalition's goals are straightforward. Energy prices must be fair, resonable, and affordable to consumers. Energy policy must be premisesd on the creation of jobs. Energy production must be safe for workers and communities. Concentration in the energy industry must be broken up. In terms of actual issues, these goals are pursued through utility-rate restructuring, introduction of alernative energy, conservation, and lobbying for stronger regulation and control.

Winpisinger, who heads the Coalition, is also a vice-president of Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee and is hiring D-Soc's Marjorie Fife as a national coordinator. At the same time, the Coalition which has so far concentrated on building up a regional base, is about to take on a Washington staff director. Bob Brandon, who until recently ran Ralph Nader's influential tax group, is the top candidate for the job.

While organizationally muted, the Washington presence of the Coalition is effective. Barbara Shailor, a lobbyist for the Machinists, has been active on the Hill on energy matters for the Coalition. And Jim Flug of Energy Action (a member of the Coalition), and one of the most effective propagandists in Washington against the oil companies, works closely with the group.

California Genus

Tom Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy has a somewhat different role than the organizations noted previously. CED, unlike the groups we have been discussing, stems directly from a political campaign: Hayden's unsuccessful run against John V. Tunney in the senatorial primary in 1976. And CED is widely perceived on two quite different levels. It is, on one hand, a staff operation for Hayden, who, as Andrew Kopkind recently described in the *Voice*, ["California Dreamin'," March 12], is playing politics with Jerry Brown amid the latter's presidential maneuvers. Hayden's national political moves are very generally taken to reflect his support—however statedly qualified—for Brown.

CED in many ways operates from the top down. Financing, for example, does not come from dues-paying members so much as from Hayden's wife, Jane Fonda. Fonda has recently become the majority partner in a health spa which will further finance CED. There is also talk of restaurants and auto-repair shops.

One CED memorandum, dating from February of this year, does not disclose a particularly extensive organization built since the run against Tunney. The memo breaks what it calls CED's "real chapters" into three categories: those containing 15 or 10, or five "activists." West L.A., San Diego, and the "State Office" are the only chapters with as many as 15 activists. Eight chapters including San Francisco, have 10; and eight have five.

There is a chicken-and-egg paradox here. Hayden contends it would be "irresponsible" for him not to run for office, since CED was built around that original purpose. On the other hand, he says, he will not run for office again until CED has built up sufficient strength to make such a bid prosper.

It is true that on a second level CED is viewed as having a life of its own. The organization gets credit for the election of progressive people in localities. It participates in various coalitions that have successfully pressed for renters' rights in the post-Proposition 13 environment. As a part of such coalitions, it has been active in environmental issues and against nuclear power. CED has won important legislation in Sacramento for solar energy and has induced Governor Brown to add liberal members to regulatory and advisory committees. Currently, CED is campaigining to disclose and limit foreign investment in California.

Political activists differe widely about the meaning and future of Hayden and the "grass-roots" organization he chairs. He himself asserts that CED will decide what presidential candiate, if any, it will support, when the time comes. It is, in the view of some, hard to believe that he would risk alientation of the major liberal unions such as the UAW, the Machinists, and the groupings forming within the Progressive Alliance by backing Brown in opposition to the common consensus. In consequence, these observers tend to think it is a matter of time until Hayden splits with Brown. It must be said, all the same, that after an evening in New York last week in which Hayden gave his overall political analysis, that time seems as yet far off. It is entirely possible that the contradictions between CED's grass-roots authenticity and Hayden's political ambition will be resolved by a parting of the ways between the one-man vanguard and any expanding base.

The Alliance's Future

While the participants in the Alliance's formation don't all agree on its purpose, it seems clear that the present plan is to create a caucus or faction, very much within the Democratic Party. This caucus, however, is not conceived of merely as the reinvigoration of traditional liberal politics. It is also viewed as the organizational context for a drive for structural change.

From the New Deal forward, liberal politics has been defined by increased spending, with very little attention given to the reorganization of society. So long as the state continued to create jobs, the corporate sector was left pretty much alone. The Alliance's success or failure will depend on whether it can channel the rage and frustration felt by Winpisinger and others into structural reform, rather than traditional liberal pressuring.

The Alliance will also undoubtedly seek to protect existing social programs that are under threat in Carter's budget. A strong caucus of this nature would have evidently worked hard (had it been in existence at the time) for the original Humphrey-Hawkins bill. It would have come to the support of regulation, most signally crushed by the Natural Gas deregulation bill last year and now under attack by the White House across the board.

This tendency of the coalition is plainly defensive in nature, intended to preserve the social programs of the New Deal. (This very week, labor lobbyists are desperately battling to stave off a deregulation of oil prices, and at the same time fighting to avert "catastrophic" health insurance—Russell Long's answer to Teddy Kennedy.) If this were all that were involved, the Alliance would not be of any novel political interest. But such is not the

Continued on page 22

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The panelists will also examine the present status of American socialism, and speculate about its prospects.
The eminent historian *Henry Steele Commager* will introduce the subject and moderate the discussion.
At some point the audience will be invited to participate. The videotape of this program will be broadcast in several European countries.
Saturday, March 31
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only idea of the Alliance's builders. The Alliance will, without question, support and fight for national health insurance. Beyond that, in longe-range terms, it hopes to establish a political base that can argue effectively for a redistribution of wealth and power within the national economy.

All of this tenative activity takes place amid and is driven forward by the threat from the right. The most conspicuous feature of the last few years has been the corporate attack, which has thrown labor on the defensive. Alert to the dangers are many citizens' organizations who can see that the right, now progressively better versed themselves in grass-roots politicking, may successfully give populism (constitutionally biased in that direction anyway) a rightward tilt.

As long as the unions have remained in a defensive posture, their energy and resources are consumed in costly and often unsuccessful battles—such as over natural gas—they are sitting ducks for the fight. Liberal union leaders gather in Washington and talk easily of enlisting their members in the cause of a progressive politics—but it is not so simple. For in an atmosphere of defeat, frustration, and anger, the workers want dramatic political action? Union leaders are well-aware how many union members voted for Proposition 13 in California, and both Fraser and Wurf recalled that in a recent Gallup Poll 78 per cent said yes to the idea of a balanced budget. It was Fraser who said this must represent the view of his membership as much as any other section of the population.

The question remains: How will the labor leaders in the Progressive Alliance galvanize their membership so that the Alliance becomes more than a suite of offices, filing cabinets, and handouts in Washington? More broadly, how can labor and the citizens' groups include those most afflicted in these years: blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, native Americans?

Challenge, Trap, and Dream

With the country on the edge of the 1980s, one simple observation can be made—as indeed it could have been at any time in the last 50 years. There is no mass organization of the left. At the same time, the thrust from the right has never been stronger. The liberal wing of the Democratic Party is in full retreat and its fundamental tenets are challenged by continuing recession and inflation. The ideological initiative is with the conservatives.

There is a distinct possibility—expressed by many of the people discussed above—that the right will continue to prevail. Mike Ansara says it is a race against time. If the right retains its ideological stamina and continues its political incursions into the center, it may well be unbeatable. The political instruments of the right are ample enough: not merely Ronald Reagan, but Jerry Brown is, despite the window dressing, a big-business candidate, rationalizing the corporate scenario of austerity.

But in parallel with the corporate victories of these years have developed, often in embryo, opposing organizations of the types described above. The question is whether the Alliance and the varying coalitions of unions and progressive groups can successfully turn the tide and place structural change on the political agenda.

The potential flaws in these coalitions should not be underestimated. The stated resolve of many of the citizens organizations is to build up an anti-corporate consciousness among their constituents, which the leaders hope will blossom into a push for new social and economic arrangements. But the leaders of these groups are often exceptionally vague on what these arrangements are to be. When pushed as to what they are talking about, an organizer says it would be presemptuous to impose abstract utopian programs on constituents recruited on far more parochial concerns: the local park laboriously restored; the stop sign victoriously installed. Wade Rathke is somewhat querulous on the matter: "I'm not organizing economists and intellectuals and armchair folk about what's the perfect world out there." Talk by such folk of socialising the means of production, in say, the energy industry is judged by Rathke to be "presumptuous and space-cadetty." But the problem is that the more a group deals with local bread-and-butter issues in limited terms, the more that group's politics become constricted by local circumstances.

Without a vision of what the world is meant to be, and what the battle is all about, there's not likely to be much of a long-term struggle; and where there is a sense of a wider politics, it is very often expressed by the organizers in a somewhat mechanistic way. It frankly lacks the fire of the right. The leaders and organizers of these citizens' groups, fearful of talking in plain language about the big issues which they feel their constituents cannot understand or to which they are innately hostile, might well ask themselves why the right is so effective with these same constituencies the same issues. If the purpose of the Alliance is to take the attack, it will have to do so by more than denunciation of price-gouging and obscene profits and invocation of competition.

One specific example: if the American people have had an education on anything in last six years, it is on the matter of energy. Any progressive alliance should certainly feel able to raise programmatic issues such as public ownership of energy resources and public control of the processing and distribution mechanisms. Yet in a month's interviews, we found extraordinary reluctance to go beyond the rubric of a fight already lost: regulation and competition.

There are more practical immediate dangers. The Progressive Alliance could very well collapse into merely a short-term effort to elect Teddy Kennedy. Recruitment unions and citizen groups into one campaign in 1980 could wreck longer-term possibilities and leave the country with yet another President who ran on the left in the primaries, to the middle in the election and to the right ever after.

Michael Harrington, a veteran in attempting to build up such coalitions, points out another danger: that progressives who previously underestimated the labor movement might now make the parallel blunder of overestimation. The fundamental concern of any union president is to secure a better deal in terms of wages and benefits for his members. Both the UAW and AFSCME face major contract negotiations this year. The UAW may well go to strike and AFSCME is negotiating for 400,000 of its members. In this situation, both Fraser and Wurf have to deal with the administration. Wurf, for example, is facing the 5.5 per cent ceiling on wage increases for government employees. A backing off by Carter on this ceiling might somewhat temper the current high feelings of antagonism.

There are all these dangers, and more. Compounding particular problems is the measure of the challenge—most keenly felt by the citizen group organizers who have opted to work not among the poor as in the 1960s, but among low-and moderate-income people, mostly blue collar workers who are not radical by nature or temptation. This challenge is to render the schema for progressive structural change persuasive and appealing. There seems little doubt, that over the long haul, the growing pressures (in the idiom of Jerry Brown, "lowered expectations") of the middle class will be felt most intensely by this moderate-income group, in which many union members find themselves. These pressures could make the victims more receptive to radical political solutions.

The trap could be to shun the terrain of the 1980s and merely lean on old solutions. This attitude would spell death for the Alliance in short order.

We have not discussed the substantive notion of an alternative party. The members of the Alliance dismiss the immediate prospect. But they don't entirely rule it out. It may well be that if the Alliance is unable to confront the present crisis within the Democratic Party, then a third party will become—sometime in the 1980s—a real prospect.

ELLEN WILLIS: NOT TONIGHT, DEAR... (P. 34)

the village VOICE

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FRED W. McDARRAH

Into the Abyss

By Alexander Cockburn & James Ridgeway

It is hard to imagine that an electorate, watching the early stages of the Democratic convention in New York, will conclude that an invigorating political message is emerging from the proceedings. The Republican coronation in Detroit had, by comparison, an ominous vigor.

The lackadaisical tussle over the "open convention" Monday night had ended in a dying fall, as though a temporary stratagem, rather than any stalwart principle, was meekly surrendering to the inevitable. Kennedy's abrupt withdrawal had an [illegible] month campaign finally sunk by the failure of a tactic, born of desperation and questionable validity in the first place.

There was a sense of shallow theatricality in the opening fight and its rapid conclusion. The stage props of division were rushed off and replaced with indecent haste by the scenery and backdrop of a "united party." Just for a moment during the rules fight, the Garden seemed on the edge of real battle. But only for a moment. Then the minimal tension dissolved into geniality and the politesse of *pro forma* debate.

(Continued on page 10)

THE MOVING TARGET

By Alexander Cockburn & James Ridgeway

Democrats Leave It to Reagan

Nothing To Fight For but Survival

All around the Garden (clockwise from top right): Brooklyn democratic boss Meade Esposito; convicted union leader Anthony Scotto; former MTA chairman Harold Fisher; Dan Rather; Senator Pat Moynihan; former White House staffer Midge Costanza; Bella Abzug.

(Continued from page one)

Udall and the Club

Within an hour of Kennedy's concession Morris Udall was celebrating the end of the party's supposed self-laceration, toasting FDR for good measure, and proclaiming the Democratic Party as the true friend of business.

The central contradiction on which the Democratic Party may well founder in November was neatly expressed in a couple of hours on opening night. A string of speakers, Governor Carey, Mayor Koch, Tip O'Neill, intoned obligatory palaver to the effect that the Democrats are the party of the minorities, the poor, and the oppressed, ever opposed to the rapacious masters of capital. But then came forth Udall, as keynote speaker, with invocation of FDR as the savior of free enterprise and quotations from *Business Week*—the house organ of big business—to belabor Reagan. Has *Business Week* really become the best instrument with which to assail the Republican platform and the Kemp-Roth tax-cutting proposals?

It was Ted Kennedy, in feistier days, who described Jimmy Carter as a clone of Ronald Reagan, and it will take more than a week's worth of rhetoric about unity and commitment to ideals to eradicate the truth of Kennedy's remark. President Carter had the impudence last Sunday night to tell Dan Rather on *60 Minutes* that Reagan would unleash the greed of big oil. Does Carter imagine that the voters will forget that he has been the president who oversaw bogus shortages, along with the highest oil company profits in the history of the United States? Only Carter could have given himself an "A" for energy policy against such a record.

The convention encapsulates the problem the Democrats face in the impending campaign. Carter's central weakness is his lack of leadership and his inconsistency. Indeed inconsistency is his trademark. Who knows what Carter stands for? For big oil and against big oil; for SALT, but also for a 28 per cent increase in defense spending over two terms; for a reduction of nuclear weapons to zero (in 1976), but subsequently for a vast increase in tactical and strategic missiles; originally against arms sales abroad, but now for arms sales abroad; for the poor, at the same time that he implements economic policies that deny them work.

The contagion of Carter's inconsistency has by now flooded into the bloodstream of the party he controls. Under the banner of unity fluttering bravely from the ramparts of Madison Square Garden shambles forth a party consumed by just one passion: survival. And as befits a party equipped with almost nothing other than the ideology of survival, the Democrats' election strategy is to hope that Ronald Reagan will defeat himself. Short of that, Carter will abase himself before the forces of history and try to persuade the electorate that he was the victim of circumstances beyond his control. As a party program, this recipe has limited appeal.

In the last few days, two distinct impressions have emerged. The first is that Democratic politicians have conceded the initiative to Reagan. The second is that they have very little idea of how to combat him. The hope of course is that what the Reagan strategists view as audacious and appealing economic policy will be unmasked as hokum and laughed offstage. But it is hard to present the Democrats as the party of economic good sense in the wake of the fiercest slumps since the 1930s, high unemployment, and inflation

Continued on page 12

THE MOVING TARGET

By Alexander Cockburn & James Ridgeway

The Politics of 1980

A New Party Nears Birth

As the Democrats agonize over whether Jimmy Carter can be ejected before bringing ruin upon one and all, and whether Teddy Kennedy can be induced to run, a group of philanthropists has decided to launch a new political party which will field candidates in 1980 and thus further confuse the political scene.

This new grouping is tentatively being called the Citizens Party.

Recalling the founding of the Republican Party by a small group in 1854, and its subsequent rise, Archibald L. Gillies, president of the John Hay Whitney Foundation, said on Monday, "It's not 'if' we start, it's 'when.'" Barring "some last-minute problem," Gillies said, he is "sure" the announcement will come soon, "probably in two to three weeks." The former unsuccessful Republican candidate for the New York City Council added, "We're at the final stages of actively filing papers. It's like giving birth."

Gillies said he hoped the new party would attract Republicans, Democrats, independents, and those not presently registered. The first step in the establishment of the new party will probably be the announcement of committees in various states.

FRED W. McDARRAH

Party-builder Gillies

Commoner a Candidate?

Over the last five months, Gillies has been working with two associates active in foundation philanthropy. They are David Hunter, executive director of the Stern Fund, and Stanley Weiss, a businessman with international mining interests. They have been meeting quietly with members of the liberal and left communities in attempts to gauge interest and forge a strategy. Gillies emphasizes that this political activity has been undertaken in their own time ("over meals" and "at weekends") and was not a part of their regular philanthropic activities, which include administering the foundations to which they are attached. "There are laws involved," he pointed out.

The three have talked with Barry Commoner, one of the most prominent figures in environmental and antinuclear politics, who has long argued that these movements would have gone much further if they had formed a political party at some point in the last few years. Commoner, who has worked hard to link environmental and economic issues, is thought by persons familiar with plans for the new party to be the preferred presidential candidate in 1980, but Weiss made it clear last week that Commoner would not necessarily be the candidate.

Ralph Nader has also participated in the discussion. In the past, Nader has talked of the possibility of new party groupings and alliances on a local and regional basis. After the mammoth antinuclear demonstration in Washington two weeks ago, Nader was reported by David Broder of the *Washington Post* to be showing fresh interest in the notion of a third party. Nader is thought, however, to favor the nomination of Teddy Kennedy rather than the creation of all full-blown third party at this stage in the game. Like William Winpisinger, head of the million-member Association of Aerospace Workers and Machinists, Nader has attacked Carter in terms so harsh that it is hard to conceive of any rapprochement. [See "Up Against the Iron Bladder," *Voice*, March 20, 1978.]

Gillies and his friends have also talked with Wade Rathke, chief organizer of ACORN, the citizen-action group which has deliberately established chapters in states where presidential primaries and caucuses will be held. ACORN, made up mostly of low- to moderate-income people, is in the process of drawing up a political platform. Rathke, it should be noted, has previously taken a dim view of third parties, placing his hopes in the Progressive Alliance—the body which aims at renaissance within the left wing of the Democratic Party.

ACORN has had close ties in the past with the United Auto Workers, whose president, Douglas Fraser, is the driving spirit behind the Progressive Alliance. Lee Webb, of the Conference of Alternative State and Local Public Policies, has also participated in discussions about a new party. Webb is on the board of the Progressive Alliance, and was a major force in its creation. He, too, has argued strongly against a third party, suggesting that it makes more sense to operate within the framework of the Democratic Party.

Foundation Politics

In recent years, Gillies, through the Whitney Foundation, and Hunter, through the Stern Fund, have been at the forefront of progressive philanthropy in the U.S. The world of foundations often operates very much like a Wall Street investment syndicate. A decision by the executive of one philanthropic group will frequently tempt others to join in. Similarly, a philanthropist or executive who thinks some project deserves support often will seek other backers and will put together what is in effect a financing package to get the project going. Among foundations and the distributors of largesse therein, Gillies and Hunter—but particularly Hunter—have been extremely active in supporting progressive and even radical projects.

Hunter and Gillies, working together, have helped to organize much of the backing over the last decade for the "Exploratory Project on Economic Alternatives" run by Gar Alperovitz and Jeff Faux. Alperovitz and Faux have been attempting to work out the economic premises for a more equitable society, including new ways to fight inflation and to foster worker-ownership in areas such as the steel industry. Both Alperovitz and Faux are close to Hunter and Gillies, and have been involved in discussions about the new party. It is believed the platform for the Citizens Party would reflect their views.

Dan Leahy, former director of the Human Affairs program at Cornell University, is now ensconced in a Washington operation (the Nuclear Information and Resource Service, a recent recipient of a grant from the Stern Fund) financed by Stanley Weiss. Leahy denies reports that he has already been hired as the new party's staff director in Washington. He says only that he will work for the party if it becomes a reality.

Gillies, asked if the Citizens Party was merely a device to split the Democratic Party for the benefit of Republicans, laughed the suggestion aside and spoke of the party's aim: the development of "substance" as opposed to the vacuous clichés of the established parties. Words like "alienation," "interaction," and "freedom" in the workplace spilled from his lips. He referred to 12 position papers he issued in 1977 when he was a candidate for City Council, presumably as hints of the possible direction of the Citizens Party.

Gillies' Guru

Gillies also said that many of the ideas he has favored, and which could form part of the new party's ideological equipment, can be found in the writings of George Lodge. Lodge, whose book *The New American Ideology* was published last year, is, of course, the son of Henry Cabot Lodge and worked in the international section of the Labor Department in the 1950s. In 1962, Lodge ran as Republican candidate for the Senate in Massachusetts and was beaten by Teddy Kennedy, then running for his first term. Lodge now teaches at the Harvard Business School.

The New American Ideology seems to argue that the current crisis in American life calls for rational state/corporate planning—a sense of "holism" in society in which consensus and what might be described as "organic religiosity" weld the polity together in a new sense of purpose. Lodge, in common with many of his colleagues at the Harvard Business School, seems to regard Japan, where the state and corporate sectors are indistinguishable and individualism is nicely subsumed with the "national sense of purpose," as an instructive model for Americans.

The idea for the Citizens Party is not a one-shot "Stop Carter" gambit; rather, it is being viewed as the beginning of a longer political process. The thought is that the party can test the political waters in 1980, and by 1984 be solidly in place to field candidates and receive federal financial support under the campaign laws; and if matters erode to the point where the choice in 1980 becomes Carter versus Bush or Connally, the Citizens Party could be a respectable sanctuary for independents and Democrats who otherwise would not vote at all.

The problem with the Citizens Party is that it appears to be a top-down operation, and it was being scathingly spoken of in Washington this week as "the foundation party," in reference to the three philanthropic executives sponsoring it. Indeed, it would appear on the surface that the Citizens Party catches its originators in a contradiction: between the espousal of local democratically based reform movements and the establishment of a new party by simple voluntarist fiat.

On the other hand, it is always possible that the Citizens Party could come to represent and embody the ideas and politics of the substantial reform movements now taking shape within the Democratic Party—particularly those now grouped within the Progressive Alliance.

Progressive Alliance Moves

The idea of the Alliance has been to engender left politics within the Democratic Party, closely associated with the progressive labor unions, without whose support there is little possibility of a mass base to any grouping. (The Citizens Party has no labor backing at present.) Until now the Progressive Alliance has been a fragile affair.

Last week, however, its leadership met and appointed an executive director, Bill Dodds. Dodds is a former Washington staff assistant for the UAW, and most recently was an aide at the National Conference of Senior Citizens. He is well liked in the labor movement and has close ties with the Machinists, whose leader, Winpisinger, has been impatient with Douglas Fraser's prudent posture on certain issues.

Ed James, who worked within the reform movement at the United Mineworkers, has a key staff position just below Dodds. It will be up to Dodds and James to put together an organization that has any long-term importance beyond the publication of position papers and possible endorsements in 1980. Fraser's vision, after all, had been the establishment of an organization which would fuel the labor movement and the Democratic Party with new ideas over the next generation. The question is whether Dodds and James will be allowed the space to develop an internal organization that can effectively harness unions and citizen organizations in building a common politics around issues such as runaway shops, plant dislocation, and the multinational corporation in general.

Birth Premature?

If the movement for structural change envisioned by the organizers of the Progressive Alliance finds no outlet, then a third party may be the only course. At this time, however, a precipitous move toward a third party is thought to be premature. And such criticisms avoid the evident sociological lacunae in the notion of the Citizens Party—a group willed into being by philanthropists and businessmen. After all, one of the goals of a truly reforming and egalitarian-minded political party should be to remove the wealth from the rich, including the assets sequestered in foundations. ■

Everybody But Reagan

Because the Voice *felt there was no clear-cut choice in the presidential election, we are not endorsing a candidate. Some staffers, however, do have strong feelings which they express below.*

Carter

On most issues I see no compelling reason to prefer Carter to Reagan. But the Republican platform on social issues—its repudiation of ERA, endorsement of a constitutional amendment banning abortion, and pledge to appoint only "prolife" judges—has convinced me that Reagan and his party must be defeated.

I believe that the cultural right's "profamily" crusade is an extremely serious threat to women's rights, to everyone's personal and sexual freedom, and to constitutional liberties. As the movement has grown stronger and bolder, it has begun openly opposing contraception and divorce as well as abortion and ERA; it opposes the separation of church and state and advocates the legal imposition of what it unabashedly refers to as *Christian* values. Aside from its concrete gains it is contributing to an increasingly repressive, mean-spirited social atmosphere. Just as the ideology of fiscal conservatism provides an economic rationale for ignoring the needs of the cities, blacks, women, and the poor, "profamily" propaganda serves as a social rationale for attacking feminists, gays, single people, working women, poor people, blacks, Jews, New Yorkers—in short, anyone who deviates from the white/Christian/middle-class/suburban/married-with-children-wife-at-home/missionary-position ideal.

While Carter's record on women's issues is terrible, he has stopped short of openly embracing the right's antifeminist agenda. It is ominous that this agenda should win the endorsement of a major party. Reagan and the Republicans have evidently decided that the cultural reactionaries are a constituency worth courting, while their opponents are not powerful enough to worry about; therefore our rights are expendable. We can't afford to let that judgment stand unchallenged. In economic and foreign affairs, even the most conservative segments of the corporate ruling class must to some extent limit their cupidity and belligerence in the interest of their own survival. No such inherent restraints apply to social issues. On the contrary, it is in the interest of the powerful to encourage people to focus their discontent on such scapegoats as sexual permissiveness and the supposed breakdown of the family, rather than on an economic system that isn't working. If the Republicans are not decisively punished for their platform, it will be open season on women. If, on the other hand, a Reagan defeat can be attributed to his antifeminist stand, it may cool politicians' eagerness to jump on the "profamily" bandwagon. Finally, I can't see allowing a Reagan administration to control Supreme Court and other judicial appointments that will affect basic social policy for years to come. So if I can bring myself to flip the little lever without throwing up, I will vote for Jimmy "Life Is Unfair" Carter. And throw up afterward.

—Ellen Willis

Anderson

Add the various virtues of the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates together, subtract their drawbacks, and divide by two. This melancholy political mathematics demonstrates that the quality of the quadrennial choice offered to the American people has been in steady decline since Roosevelt versus Wilkie. Those who hoped the slide had bottomed out with the ludicrous Carter/Ford matchup turn out, depressingly, to have underestimated the major parties' genius for mediocrity. Four years ago, it was possible to believe that Carter might be a good, or even great, president; instead, he is the worst since Warren G. Harding. And since this year's Republican is considerably more dangerous than the amiable bozo they offered us last time, the need for an alternative to the two major candidates could not be more obvious.

There are two attractive possibilities: the Citizens Party candidacy of Barry Commoner and the independent John Anderson campaign. Of the two, I prefer Anderson. I say this knowing that he is not, to my mind, as good across the board on issues as Commoner, but he is infinitely better on nuclear expansionism, energy policies, and the entire constellation of "profamily" programs that are the cutting edge of the neo-conservative backlash than either Carter or Reagan. And unlike Commoner, Anderson—if not deserted by frightened Democrats—is likely to score well enough to tap into the federal election funds that have been the sole property of the major parties. The consequences of this precedent for any future attempt to break the Republicrat hegemony cannot be overstated. If Anderson does well enough to get that money, the possibilities of a winning third-party candidate for 1984 are geometrically expanded; if he fails, they are doomed.

For New Yorkers, there is an additional reason to favor Anderson. Here, he is the candidate of the Liberal Party, which has recently been acting less like an employment agency and more like an independent left force. A successful Anderson campaign will be a boost for the forward-looking elements among the Liberals—and they, in turn, will be a boost for us when Ed Koch captures the Republican, Democratic, and Conservative mayoral nominations next year.

As for the argument (often buttressed with tearful reminiscences of Hubert Humphrey) that "A vote for Anderson is a vote for Reagan," the most recent polls show that it's factually untrue. While Anderson's vote has remained constant, Carter and Reagan have flipflopped in the lead. Carter's half-hearted apologists may in their desperation argue that Anderson and Carter are "on the same side," but it is clear that the mass of voters accurately perceive that it is Carter and Reagan who are interchangeable. (This is very different, for example, from the U.S. Senate race, where Holtzman and D'Amato are ideological opposites.)

The pluses for Anderson are simple: first and most important, it is possible to vote for him without holding your nose, and second, a strong Anderson showing is the single most effective way to insure that we will not be faced with yet another variation of lesser-evilism in 1984. As for the negative—that such a showing might mean we get one kind of bad president this year instead of another—well, life is unfair.

—Geoffrey Stokes

Commoner

Voters whose fear of Reagan hasn't overshadowed their scorn for Carter by Election Day will still face a choice among the protest candidates.

That category includes John Anderson, whose mushy approach has caught up with him in public opinion polls. Anderson is no more an alternative for radicals or progressives now than when his candidacy was first announced last spring. Though perhaps the least of three evils in a few respects, he deserves to be judged on his record—antiworker, antipoor, and pronuclear—as much as Carter or Reagan. the uninspiring platform put forward by his 1980 campaign doesn't lay his congressional record to rest. A vote for him may satisfy our hostility to Carter and Reagan, but will mean nothing more.

A more telling vote cold be cast for Libertarian candidate Ed Clark, who does stand for a coherent philosophy. Despite his decent stands on some issues—abortion and gay rights, for example—Clark's approach to government is simpleminded. To call, as the Libertarians do, for an end to public schools is both mean-spirited and deceptive. Their pure faith in an unleased capitalism ignores economic history and human welfare.

Whatever the future of the Citizens Party, and whatever errors it has made in the campaign, the best protest vote is one cast for Barry Commoner and Ladonna Harris. Their platform is the only one which addresses the central issue of american economics, politics, and foreign policy: corporate power running wild

Commoner has been criticized as a single-issue candidate, an energy and environmental specialist without broader perspective. His inability to overcome that sterotype can be attributed in part to the mass media, which have resolutely ignored the party's platform. Only when a citizens Party ad uttered "bullshit" over the airwaves could the minds of the nation's editors be captured, and then only for a few moments of hypocritical indignation.

But the platform represents a hopeful direction for our future, and an answer to the corporate program of austerity, pollution, and "limited" war. It calls for public control of investment directed toward conservation, mass transit, and solar energy. It advocates price controls to control inflation without destroying jobs. It is oriented toward peace, not belligerence, and would reduce Pentagon extravagance rather than begin a new arms race. Criticized by sectarian groups as too moderate, the Citizens Party platform most forcefully addresses the daily oppression by race and sex which injures a majority of Americans.

The Democratic Party's cynical leaders have taken liberal and left votes for granted during the past decade. They never learned the lessons of 1968, and they believe the exaggerated predictions of a conservative resurgence. To keep us in line this year, they have a better bogeyman than usual. They want us to be afraid, but I prefer to scare them instead. I don't think a vote for Anderson, the ephemeral, will do that. Perhaps a vote for Commoner will.

—Joe Conason

Commoner

Initially, when it appeared that he had a chance to take the state, I planned to vote for John Anderson. A jerk, of course, but an Anderson victory in just one state might have fucked up the electoral system in a very salutory way. As my man went into his fade I was persuaded after much agonizing to vote for Carter—that is, against Reagan. The Supreme Court argument never quite dispelled the image of Jimmy spending New Year's Eve with the Shah, but I found the likely fate of every progressive-to revolutionary movement in Latin America under Reagan too much to stomach. But then I thought some more and had a statistical revelation—residents of New York State need never vote for a Democratic presidential candidate they don't like. If the Democrat has a shot nationwide, he (or she, as they say) will win here in a romp. Don't throw away your vote, folks. Support Commoner.

—Robert Christgau

ORTH *Continued from page 20*

On the stump at Dixie Trucker's Home truck stop, McLean, Illinois, Reagan attacks Carter's economic policies from the back of a huge semi-rig. This is the second stop of eight, part of a 164 mile bus tour through central and southern Illinois from Peoria to St. Louis, a perfect album of small town Americana with all the red, white and blue trimmings made for TV. Yet because it takes place on a Saturday it will never get the network exposure it would have had on a weekday. "It's OK though," says a TV cameraman, "we just keep piling up these images for local TV."

"It makes no sense to suggest the guy who got us in all this trouble get us out of it," Reagan tells the crowd. "Could you please move your sign," an NBC cameraman asks a woman. "If you don't, millions

Now Reagan is at Lincoln's tomb. It's a great photo opportunity. The tradition here is to rub the nose of a huge bronze bust of Lincoln for luck. Posing for the cameras, Reagan patiently goes through the ritual. Then he lifts Nancy so she can reach up and rub the nose, too. Whirr, click. Reagan goes into the tomb and when he comes back out Something Terrible happens. He starts to answer a pool reporter's questions about a hostage deal. Scribble scribble, whirr whirr. But wait! It's not in the script. Naughty Reagan has deviated and Lyn Nofziger runs over, freaked, nearly tackling the reporter in the process. He has let his candidate get away from him! "Thank you very much, thank you," Nofziger says. It's over.

Back on the bus James Brady, Reagan's director of public affairs and senior policy and issues adviser, discourses on

"We don't want a story to break before we're ready to communicate it to the market." Brady looks like one of those bears in the old Hamms Beer commercials—if you can picture one wearing Guccis and a yellow crew-neck with an embroidered duck. "You always have to think of two things, reach and frequency," Brady explains. "We speak through you. If one person with only limited circulation breaks a story, no one else writes about it because it's not news. You do it [control the access] based on your communication plan to the American people."

Brady is responsible for briefing Reagan on the issues. He describes the candidate as both "verbal and visual." "I verbally brief Reagan but I send in the written stuff first. Right, short memos. I figure three hours of preparation for every fifteen minutes I talk to him. What pushes

"you" when he means "I"). "You have a sense of being a part of history whether you win or lose—you are electing the Leader of the Free World. It's the ultimate challenge because on the other side you get your intellectual and tactical equals. It's too important to be a game but it's the ultimate game—lifesmanship monopoly."

From the back of the bus, Gary Schuster of the Detroit *News* calls to the Reagan staffers in the front, "Did you hear about the editorial in the San Jose *Mercury News*? It suggested you put a Sierra Club volunteer in a room with a tree and Reagan in a room with a running car and see who dies first."

At the coal mine, Reagan disappears for an hour longer than scheduled. At first the explanations are teasing. "He saw dark at the end of the tunnel, got in his jammies, and went to sleep," says Douglas [illegible] of *The New York Times*. Then

THE MOVING TARGET

By Alexander Cockburn & James Ridgeway

Neither Reagan Nor Carter

The temptation, for many who have regarded Jimmy Carter with mounting dislike over the past four years, is nonetheless to swallow hard and vote for him on November 4. Such a position is traditionally summed up in the phrase "Lesser of Two Evils." Which is the Greater Evil?

- Ronald Reagan installed next to the N-button, and flanked by such advisers as General Daniel O. Graham, who has stated publicly that a lilac bush will afford sufficient protection against a one-megaton bomb exploding one mile away?
- Ronald Reagan appointing four reactionary justices to the Supreme Court?
- Ronald Reagan pushing the defense budget to $310 billion by 1985, and slicing or eliminating New Deal social welfare programs to this end?
- Ronald Reagan, the darling of big business, placing the nation's economic destiny even more firmly in the hands of the major corporations and banks?

Unsafe at Any Speed?

The contours of Reagan as Greater Evil have of course been magnified by Carter and his assistants, and there are signs that the tactic has worked, that the electorate is being frightened into voting the "safer" way.

Last-minute retreat to the "safer" candidate is a dubious venture. Carter campaigned in 1976 for a reduction in defense spending, and after one year in office accepted the main premise of the hawks: that the United States is vulnerable to Soviet attack. This concession produced the MX, eroded the prospects for SALT II, led to presidential approval (in P.D. 59) of the feasibility of limited nuclear "exchanges," and substantially heightened the dangers of nuclear disaster.

President Carter is now intimating that if re-elected, he will again activate the drive—which he all but extinguished in the last two years—to get SALT II approved. Consider the dove of 1976, the vitality of Zbigniev Brzezinski, and ask yourself what basis for trust exists today or tomorrow.

The Supreme Court argument is particularly delectable to liberals who witness the Nixon legacy. But reflect on the possibility of Griffin Bell on the high bench as a preliminary corrective to excessive reliance on this mode of thinking. The end logic is to recommend popular elections for the Supreme Court and leave to the justices the task of appointing the president.

The notion that the economic welfare of most Americans would be better tended under a Democratic rather than a Republican administration is highly questionable. Carter, as Teddy Kennedy tirelessly pointed out for the first eight months of this year, has employed traditional conservative policies in fighting inflation. He has superintended a recession and increased unemployment. He had nothing to do with the present recovery and inflation will continue unabated. Today both Carter and Reagan essentially subscribe to the same policies enunciated by Arthur Burns and his cohorts. There is no Lesser of Two Evils here.

FRED W. McDARRAH

Anderson: the candidate of the center

As for big business, it is indeed clear that despite his alleged lunges into populism, Ronald Reagan represents the interests of the major energy companies. The same is true of Jimmy Carter.

The Graveyard Shift

None of the foregoing observations should be taken as recommendations for Ronald Reagan. On sunny days he has a certain avuncular charm and largely because of a spirited Democratic legislature in California he came away from two terms as governor with a moderate record. But he is a bigot on social issues, reactionary in economic matters, and banefully erratic in international affairs.

Why then should one not vote for Jimmy Carter?

Cast with whatever revulsion and anguish, a vote for Carter is acquiescence in the increasingly rapid drift to the right. Far more than in 1976, it is futile to maintain that election of Carter somehow goes hand-in-hand with a desirable preservation of the New Deal coalition embedded in the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party has become the graveyard of beneficial social change.

We recognize that many social democrats insist that the proper course is to stick by the party and its candidates and work from within. In this perspective hopes flared at the end of last year with the establishment of the Progressive Alliance and the recruitment of some liberal unions—notably the United Auto Workers—and public-interest groups to its banner.

Not much has been heard from the Progressive Alliance ever since, during bail-out for Chrysler's stockholders, has backed protectionist measures for the auto industry as a whole, and is now in the unenviable position of superintending layoffs of its own members at Chrysler. As a member of the Chrysler board, Doug Fraser is now a distressing emblem of the social-democratic delusion. It may seem harsh to single out the UAW, historically one of the most liberal unions in the country, but in a period of protracted economic decline union leaders are inevitably forced into the position of cooperating with the state, itself the helpmeet of business, in restoring profit margins and boosting the rate of return.

Anderson and the Center

Political geography always changes more slowly than one thinks, but it would be a mistake to discount such shifts as are detectable today. There has been much gleeful demoliton of John Anderson as one more safety valve for Business As Usual, as anti-labor, an economic conservative, closet creature of the Trilateral Commission. But the interest of Anderson has been that he is the candidate of the center, which in this campaign is expressed in three basic propositions: restraint in foreign policy, frugality in economic affairs, and liberalism on social questions. The two major parties, spread out among the special-interest blocs, have had increasing difficulty in accomodating these centrist imperatives.

At the very least Anderson's candidacy has strengthened the assumption that a U.S. presidential election can contain more than two candidates, and has widened the path carved by Eugene McCarthy through the thickets which obstruct both ballot and media access.

A vote for Anderson is more than an expression of protest. It represents support for the ideas of the center and encourages the practicality of challenging the two-party option in the times ahead. Why return "to the fold" in November of 1984? A vote for Anderson today will, even if ever so slightly, diminish the inevitability of another Lesser-of-Two-Evils choice next time around.

By far the most provocative can- the Liber- about the 19th-century liberal tradition, the Libertarians are basically anarchists of the right. They have the courage of their convictions. Their presidential candidate, Ed Clark, has supplied the best critique of the U.S.'s international, interventionist role in the postwar era. He calls for withdrawal from NATO and other military alliances, and has even had the temerity to urge upon American Jews his opposition to U.S. military aid to Israel.

The Libertarians are for capitalism with a verve that makes Reagan look like a bureaucrat in the Department of Commerce. Their program is based in the belief that the state, not capital, is the enemy. Their vision is antidiluvian and many of their prescriptions noxious, but their activity in this campaign has been beneficial, overall. As with Anderson, their readiness to debate seriously has been refreshing and their determination to embark on a long-term onslaught on two-party consensus exemplary.

The Commoner Cause

"Hold your nose and vote for Commoner" is an ironic phrase we often hear around the office. It suggests the somewhat enigmatic characteristics of the Citizens Party, of which Commoner is the presidential candidate. To be frank, it is hard to know whether the Citizens Party exists or not, aside from the voyagings of Commoner and his running mate LaDonna Harris, its childish "Bullshit" campaign ad, and the efforts of a few hard-working members in a handful of states.

Commoner can tend to the incoherent if pressed excessively on economic and foreign-policy questions. But he has some persuasive credentials: his long-standing opposition to nuclear power, both military and civil; and beyond this a left philosophical posture which has propelled him to the appropriate conclusion that the disparate political movements of the last couple of decades should cohere into

FRED W. McDARRAH

Commoner: constructive social policies

lasting political organization. A vote for Barry Commoner is conceivably a vote for a party; and certainly a vote for constructive social policies.

To restate the matter: the best hope for progressive politics in this country is to take advantage of the relative decline in appeal of the two-party option and get on with the business of trying to foster the creation of a left contest. (And so far as contest-fostering is concerned, the only remotely persuasive argument for Carter to be heard on the left is that in the international arena, notably in Central and Latin America, his policies have allowed more latitude for progress than would those of a Reagan administration.) In the fostering of change in the United States, a vote for Carter, much less Reagan, is not a constructive act. Of the other candidates John Anderson seems nearest to attaining the five per cent which would record a victory over the two-party matrix. Commoner, with far less chance of this modest triumph, is the person who holds the views we reckon—with many reserva-

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Where Have All the Radicals Gone?

"Serious socialist politics," said the ancient friend of Sacco and Vanzetti, "is a life's work." So whatever happened to the New Left?

By Nat Hentoff

Gus, a cadaverous, whispery man of uncertain age, was an organizer. Against the bosses, against the Communists who were then trying to take over certain unions, against various cadres of anti-Semites flourishing in Boston. An anarchist at heart, he had become a libertarian socialist because, he said, anarchism was self-indulgent. People couldn't listen to anarchists, and he wanted to get something done.

At the time, 1941, Gus was working for a young, red-haired, devoutly Catholic muckraker. Frances Sweeney. Her style was somewhat like Katharine Hepburn's, except that Fran didn't need a Spencer Tracy. Gus was her subordinate. All of us were. I worked for her too, but more of that later.

I was 16 and considered myself a seasoned radical, having organized a chain of candy stores (three) and having written some fustian anticapitalist and anti-Communist polemics, a few of which had even been published. Neither Fran nor Gus ever told me what they thought of these broadsides.

Gus, who moved as if he was always in camouflage, had an unnerving habit of noiselessly materializing behind people he knew, tapping them on the shoulder, and muttering, "Whatcha do today?" He did that to me one morning on Boston's main drag, except instead of the question, he told me to come along with him. "Time you started to get educated," Gus said.

He took me to a printing shop that might have been imported intact from Dickens' London. The owner, a tall, stooped Italian with long, white hair, appeared even more ancient. As Gus had told me on the way, the old man had raised money, designed strategy, and printed circulars and denunciations all through the slow killing of his friends, Sacco and Vanzetti. And his was still the shop at which anarchists and socialists had their work done. For them, he had very long lines of credit.

The printer gave me two portions of advice, looking at me all the while with an affectionate amusement which was not condescending but rather encouraging, in a speculative way. "Learn a skill," he said. "If you really know how to do something besides talk doctrine, you will be in the real world with the rest of us and your doctrine will become flesh. It will breathe."

"Also," the printer said, "politics, serious politics, serious socialist politics, is a life's work. And by the end, the most that you can expect is that you will have had something to do with shortening the odds."

For a while during the 1960s, I thought that the ancient Italian might have been wrong about how long it was going to take. Never before had there been so many homegrown radicals, and they were so young and so insistently visible. From Selma to the Pentagon, they did battle with what they rightly called "illegitimate" power—downing a president, precipitating the end to a war, providing the momentum for a panoply of antidiscrimination laws. I often wished the old man were still alive.

And this was just the beginning because the legions of liberators exultantly warned us that the next generation would be even better. They're going to be more radical than we are."

The '60s radicals were quite wrong about their siblings, and now they themselves seem, in large part, to have dropped out of the march to the millenium. Indeed—even despite the current marshaling of antinuclear forces—the collective marvels, perils, and exhilarating confrontations of the '60s seem so distant, almost dreamlike. Or worse, a couple of dried-out pages in the standard secondary-school texts.

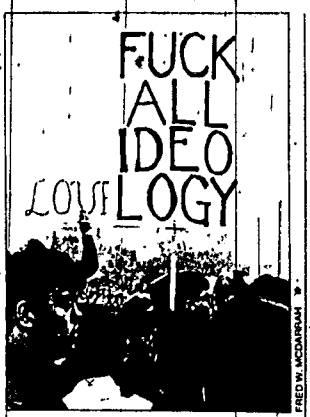
Yet a recent book, *They Should Have Served That Cup of Coffee/7 Radicals Remember the '60s* (South End Press, Box 68, Astor Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02123, $5) brings back much of the textures and rhythms of those glory years. On occasion, the immediacy is quite startling. This collection of essays by ardent pilgrims of that time would be valuable if only for its power to quicken one's own memories of how much truth *was* spoken to power (as the Quakers say) then. Just as there is a careless, ahistorical tendency now to dismiss nearly all the domestic programs of the '60s as fraudulent, so there has been a dour discounting of what was going on in the streets, except perhaps for the antiwar movement.

However, Bernice Reagon, telling in resonant detail of her al fresco education as a young Southern black woman, speaks for many others: "The Civil Rights Movement gave me the power to challenge *any* line that limits me." And while the economic order was surely not changed by the movement, as Jean Smith, who used to be with SNCC, says, "Before, everything you had was at the pleasure of the white people. Now Black people have rights. That's the biggest thing that's changed."

Another participant-historian, Reggie Schell of Philadelphia, joined the Black Panther Party because, on television, he saw what was happening in Selma and felt he had to do *something* to change himself so that he could move to change others. In his way, like Bernice Reagon and Jean Smith, Schell learned—though the Black Panther Party disintegrated—that he *can* put himself on the line. A most useful piece of lifetime knowledge.

Similarly, Ernie Allen—even as he meticulously traces the auguries of doom in the history of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (which had considerable impact on the automotive industry in the late '60s)—clearly intends the autopsy to benefit future radical organizing of workers on the line. Both the League and the white New Left, Allen emphasizes, failed primarily because they did not know how to organize *themselves* in a durable, democratic way. For all the chanting about participatory democracy, most decisions came *down*—from the revolutionary hierarchy.

Dick Cluster, an alumnus of various New Left phenomena, both distills the excitement of the constant high energy of those years and also adds his analysis of what was grievously lacking for the movement's survival. Sounding as if the dybbuk of the old Italian printer in Boston were in him, Cluster notes: "Without [illegible] not merely reflect politics; it *is* politics."



FRED W. MCDARRAH

Central Park, April 1967

Not that this knowledge is the exclusive preserve of women. An elderly black man I know once told me, "As soon as I get up in the morning, *everything* is politics." But a lot of women didn't really *see* that until the feminist surge that began in the '60s. That movement too, however, has developed certain oligarchic tendencies which try to stifle internal criticism. Rigidity is hardly synonymous with continuing vitality.

Witness the artillery barrage by some of the generals of the women's movement in the June 4 *Voice* letters column against Nancy Borman's article on Random House's censorship of a chapter in the Redstockings' *Feminist Revolution*. In her answer, Nancy Borman utterly flattened her attackers. I would add only that it is especially dismaying to see Bella Abzug—who has always been unyielding in her free speech—condoning censorship. As Bella used to know, if Redstockings can be muzzled so, one day, may she, even she.

Aside from this lapse into attempted thought-control, some sections of the women's movement have been criticized, from the '60s on, for being insufficiently diversified. A class tilt. But the same was true, as several of the writers in *They Should Have Served That Cup of Coffee* underline, of practically all the New Left groups. And that's perhaps the key reason this once rolling river of transformation largely dried up.

I first ran into that problem, having been part of it, in Boston during my time with Frances Sweeney in the early 1940s. She ran a small paper, *The City Record*, which jubilantly exposed corrupt politicians (we hardly had any other kind), racism, anti-Semitism, and other pestilences. Fran would not accept advertising since she was sure she would ultimately offend all advertisers, and so she was always on the brink of extinction.

Her reporters were kid volunteers, a number of them Jewish, all from the more prestigious public schools. Fran was a hard editor, especially about facts. "A fact," she told us, "is something that can be proved. Anything else is your *interpretation*. We do not have space for interpretations, except mine. Your job is to bring me facts. And they'd better hold up."

We brought her notebooks full of facts which infuriated a lot of public figures, and we thought we were doing just fine. One day, however, she called a meeting of all us kid reporters. Grim, Fran passed out sets of test papers. The questions had to do with our attitudes toward various racial, religious, and economic blocs of grandly pluralistic Boston. The only part of the test I remember called on us to check off what we considered to be the most dominant characteristics of each of these groups—for instance, Catholics, Jews, blacks, working class, middle class.

We turned in our papers, puzzled at the exercise and apprehensive at the ferocity with which she grabbed them from our hands. A week later, Frances Sweeney strode in, threw the test papers down, sat on the edge of the table, swept us with a baleful glance, and coldly began:

"It's just what I thought. I've gotten my reporters from the wrong places. Except for the Catholics among you, you are the scrimiest bunch of anti-Catholics I have ever had the penance of being associated with. Except for the Jews among you, you have mastered just about every stereotype of the Yid. Except for the Negroes among you, and I am mortified that there are none, you have managed in your short lives to swallow just about every coon image pushed at you in the movies. And as for your attitudes toward people who work with their hands, my God, you are ignorant snobs."

We begged, we promised that we would scourge our souls of the disgusting blight she had discovered, we asked for guidance. We reminded her of her belief in redemption. We were all put on probation.

"Provincial," Frances Sweeney said. "That's what's wrong with middle-class radicals. They're provincial, and they get worse as they get older. They wind up keening to themselves about why nothing ever lasted. But what can you build on just a spit of sand?" ■

Personal life does

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104 Labor, Minority Groups Organize to Battle 'Right-Wing Corporate Power'

BY HARRY BERNSTEIN
Times Labor Writer

DETROIT—A coalition of 104 liberal, labor and minority groups somewhat hesitantly launched a counterattack here Tuesday against "the growing threat of right-wing corporate power in America."

The hesitation of the delegates—representing millions throughout the country—stemmed from their concern that the alliance they are trying to form may founder because it contains diverse and often antagonistic elements, ranging from "hard hat" AFL-CIO construction unions to the left-wing National Lawyers Guild.

But speaker after speaker attending the convention, which was called by Douglas A. Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers, voiced agreement on what they said was an urgent need for a "coalition of liberal coalitions" to build a new political movement, preferably within the Democratic Party.

The delegates achieved the goals of this first meeting, which were to form an organization and to create an "issues commission" to develop strategies and tactics to reach the social and economic goals they share.

They also created "a political reform commission" to work toward doing away with the filibuster as an institution of the U.S. Senate and to try to "strengthen party accountability."

Douglas A. Fraser
AP photo

The delegates chose no name for their coalition, but several names were suggested for later consideration, including the New Progressive Alliance and the Coalition of Liberal Coalitions.

Some of the delegates here were clearly opposed to President Carter, blaming him for a substantial proportion of the recent defeats suffered by liberal forces in Congress.

But Fraser and most of the other leaders here rebuffed that approach, although they all said their enthusiastic response to Fraser's call for the convention did stem in large part from their unhappiness with Carter and the Democratic-controlled Congress.

The session here brought together representatives of more than 30 unions, most of the nation's major women's organizations, black and Chicano groups, and even the National Football League Players Assn.

At times, the more-than-200 delegates seemed uncomfortable with each other when they learned of the radical background of some of the participants, or, in contrast, the relatively conservative background of others.

But they agreed unanimously that the coalition should be given a chance to succeed and that they would try to stay with it during its initial stages.

Many of the delegates said that the bitterness of the defeats suffered by all of the forces represented here during the last session of Congress could give the new organization all the momentum it needed to become politically significant.

The tax legislation just adopted by Congress was denounced as the most regressive tax measure in modern times, because it primarily helps high-income groups; the energy measure was denounced as a defeat for consumers who, it was charged, will be forced to spend billions of dollars in higher energy costs while adding to the profits of the oil companies.

The delegates talked of the defeat the unions suffered in their efforts to get labor law reform legislation through Congress. And they were furious over the just-adopted Humphrey-Hawkins jobs bill, a measure which many of them had fought for, but which, as finally passed, was, as one delegate put it, "just a shell of what Hubert Humphrey wanted."

Fraser said that while the convention here Tuesday was not called as an anti-Carter movement, "I would say we may well be on a collision course with the Democratic Party unless it makes changes."

Most of the speakers said that the convention would have been unnecessary if the Democratic Party platform adopted in 1976 had been implemented by Congress under Carter's leadership.

But, they said, powerful right-wing corporate interests have undermined the platform and, as Fraser put it, "These corporate interests have been outspending us, outworking us, and, alas, they are beginning to outthink us."

The delegates conceded that many of the liberal measures proposed over the last decade or so to help the poor and middle-income groups have been defeated by conservatives who had taken over this issue, except that the tax reform measure as finally adopted by Congress gave the benefits to the rich instead of middle- and low-income Americans.

There was some talk about a third party if the "coalition of coalitions" failed to reform or substantially change the Democratic Party policies.

Sol Stetin, vice president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, said, "It is time for these organizations here today to give serious consideration to either getting full control of the Democratic Party or forming a party of our own."

Fraser and others publicly rejected such suggestions as unfeasible, although Fraser said privately, "Down the road, perhaps, if nothing else works, we might have to give consideration to such an idea."

Martin Ward, head of the Plumbers Union, said the coalition would thrive if it didn't try to include too many issues.

"If we can stick to the broad matters such as congressional reform and an end to the filibuster, this might just succeed," Ward said.

Vice President Mondale, once the favorite of progressive forces here, was sharply criticized by several speakers for the "arm twisting" he used to get the energy bill passed by Congress.

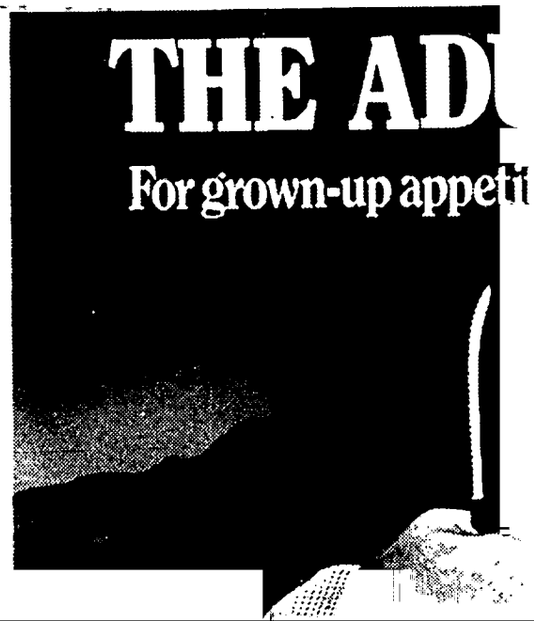
The political figure most widely admired here clearly was Sen. Kennedy. Privately, every delegate interviewed said that he would prefer to see Kennedy as the Democratic Party presidential nominee in 1980. But, they said, they expect Carter to be the nominee.

Fraser, concluding the conference, said he hoped that, for the first time since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, a truly cohesive coalition of liberal, labor and minority forces could be brought together to "transform the Democratic Party into a genuinely progressive people's party."

The diversity of organizations represented here was indicated by the attendance of such traditional rivals as the AFL-CIO American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Assn.

But the range of unions alone was broader than in any previous coalition, including such organizations as the Carpenters Union, the Chemical Workers Union, the Communication Workers of America, the Laborers' International Union, the Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the Operating Engineers, the Retail Clerks, the Sheet Metal Workers, Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers of America, the International Assn. of Machinists, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employes.

Even more diverse in some ways was the list of other organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Indian Movement, the Americans for Democratic Action, the Committee for National Health Insurance, the Consumer Federation of America, Friends of the Earth, Jewish Labor Committee, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Council of La Raza, the National Council of Negro Women, the National Organization of Women, the Urban League, the Sierra Club, the Urban Bishops Coalition and the Scientists Institute for Public Information, headed by Barry Commoner.



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Martin Ward, head of the Plumbers Union, said the coalition would thrive if it didn't try to include too many issues.

"If we can stick to the broad matters such as congressional reform and an end to the filibuster, this might just succeed," Ward said.

Vice President Mondale, once the favorite of progressive forces here, was sharply criticized by several speakers for the "arm twisting" he used to get the energy bill passed by Congress.

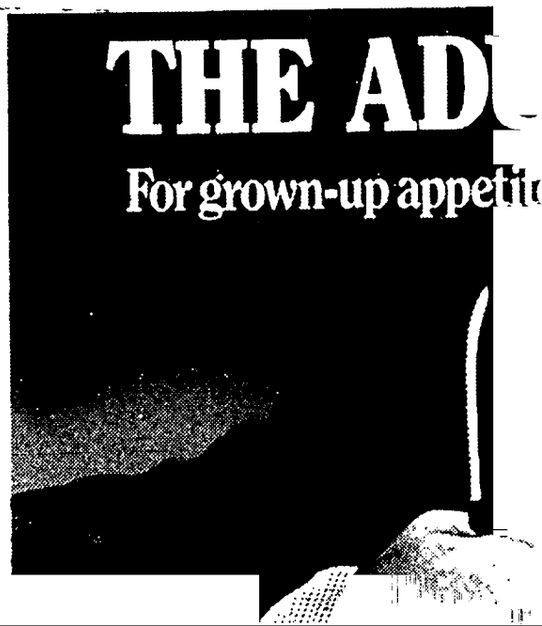
The political figure most widely admired here clearly was Sen. Kennedy. Privately, every delegate interviewed said that he would prefer to see Kennedy as the Democratic Party presidential nominee in 1980. But, they said, they expect Carter to be the nominee.

Fraser, concluding the conference, said he hoped that, for the first time since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, a truly cohesive coalition of liberal, labor and minority forces could be brought together to "transform the Democratic Party into a genuinely progressive people's party."

The diversity of organizations represented here was indicated by the attendance of such traditional rivals as the AFL-CIO American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Assn.

But the range of unions alone was broader than in any previous coalition, including such organizations as the Carpenters Union, the Chemical Workers Union, the Communication Workers of America, the Laborers' International Union, the Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the Operating Engineers, the Retail Clerks, the Sheet Metal Workers, Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers of America, the International Assn. of Machinists, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employes.

Even more diverse in some ways was the list of other organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Indian Movement, the Americans for Democratic Action, the Committee for National Health Insurance, the Consumer Federation of America, Friends of the Earth, Jewish Labor Committee, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Council of La Raza, the National Council of Negro Women, the National Organization of Women, the Urban League, the Sierra Club, the Urban Bishops Coalition and the Scientists Institute for Public Information, headed by Barry Commoner.



ARTHUR JENSTEIN
Times Labor Writer

DETROIT—A coalition of 104 liberal, labor and minority groups somewhat hesitantly launched a counterattack here Tuesday against "the growing threat of right-wing corporate power-in-America."

The hesitation of the delegates—representing millions throughout the country—stemmed from their concern that the alliance they are trying to form may founder because it contains diverse and often antagonistic elements, ranging from "hard hat" AFL-CIO construction unions to the left-wing National Lawyers Guild.

But speaker after speaker attending the convention, which was called by Douglas A. Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers, voiced agreement on what they said was an urgent need for a "coalition of liberal coalitions" to build a new political movement, preferably within the Democratic Party.

The delegates achieved the goals of this first meeting, which were to form an organization and to create an "issues commission" to develop strategies and tactics to reach the social and economic goals they share.

They also created "a political reform commission" to work toward doing away with the filibuster as an institution of the U.S. Senate and to try to "strengthen party accountability."

Douglas A. Fraser
AP photo

The delegates chose no name for their coalition, but several names were suggested for later consideration, including the New Progressive Alliance and the Coalition of Liberal Coalitions.

Some of the delegates here were clearly opposed to President Carter, blaming him for a substantial proportion of the recent defeats suffered by liberal forces in Congress.

But Fraser and most of the other leaders here rebuffed that approach, although they all said their enthusiastic response to Fraser's call for the convention did stem in large part from their unhappiness with Carter and the Democratic-controlled Congress.

The session here brought together representatives of more than 30 unions, most of the nation's major women's organizations, black and Chicano groups, and even the National Football League Players Assn.

At times, the more-than-200 delegates seemed uncomfortable with each other when they learned of the radical background of some of the participants, or, in contrast, the relatively conservative background of others.

But they agreed unanimously that the coalition should be given a chance to succeed and that they would try to stay with it during its initial stages.

Many of the delegates said that the bitterness of the defeats suffered by all of the forces represented here during the last session of Congress could give the new organization all the momentum it needed to become politically significant.

The tax legislation just adopted by Congress was denounced as the most regressive tax measure in modern times, because it primarily helps high-income groups; the energy measure was denounced as a defeat for consumers who, it was charged, will be forced to spend billions of dollars in higher energy costs while adding to the profits of the oil companies.

The delegates talked of the defeat the unions suffered in their efforts to get labor law reform legislation through Congress. And they were furious over the just-adopted Humphrey-Hawkins jobs bill, a measure which many of them had fought for, but which, as finally passed, was, as one delegate put it, "just a shell of what Hubert Humphrey wanted."

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But, they said, powerful right-wing corporate interests have undermined the platform and, as Fraser put it, "These corporate interests have been outspending us, outworking us, and, alas, they are beginning to outthink us."

The delegates conceded that many of the liberal measures proposed over the last decade or so to help the poor and the minorities of this country had failed and that the new coalition would have to come up with fresh ideas.

But they agreed also that many of their "old" ideas would still suffice if they could be passed by Congress in the form that the progressive forces originally proposed.

For example, the delegates here enthusiastically endorsed the national health insurance ideas of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and criticized Carter's more modest health care proposal.

"That is not a new idea, but we just have not been able to defeat the forces opposed to us on it, nor to get Carter and a majority of the Democrats on the side of the insurance program we are advocating," one of the delegates said.

Rep. Ronald V. Dellums (D-Calif.) said that liberals had long called for tax reform, but now it was the conservatives who had taken over this issue, except that the tax reform measure as finally adopted by Congress gave the benefits to the rich instead of middle- and low-income Americans.

There was some talk about a third party if the "coalition of coalitions" failed to reform or substantially change the Democratic Party policies.

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